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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economic Development Administration
Washington, DC 20230

November 22, 2022

RE: FOIA REQUEST File No. HQ 23-07 Cross Referenced to DOC-EDA-2023-000191

This final letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) ("FOIA") request that was dated and received on October 24, 2022 by the Economic Development Administration ("EDA") via the FOIAOnline system.

Per your request, you sought the following information:

- "A copy of the current EDA Strategic Plan (not the Commerce Department strategic plan);
- A copy of the most recent EDA comprehensive Workforce Plan or Workforce Development Plan, and
- A copy of the IT Modernization Plan."

Fees are charged for processing FOIA requests in accordance with the uniform fee schedule outlined in the Department of Commerce Regulations found in 15 C.F.R. § 4.11. As an "All Other" requester, you are subject to fees charged for search of the records (excluding the first two hours) and duplication of the records (excluding the first 100 pages). All responsive records are being released in their entirety and there are no fees associated with your request.

If you have any questions or concerns or would like to discuss any aspect of your request, you may contact the analyst who processed your request Ms. Ta'Shima Oliphant by email at toliphant@eda.gov. You may also contact EDA's FOIA Public Liaison:

Jeffrey Roberson
JRoberson@eda.gov

In addition, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001
telephone: (202) 741-5770; toll free: (877) 684-6448
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Office of the General Counsel
Room 5896
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

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The appeal letter, the envelope, and the e-mail subject line should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." The email, FOIAonline, and Office are monitored only on working days during normal business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday). FOIA appeals posted to the e-mail box, FOIAonline, or Office after normal business hours will be deemed received on the next normal business day. If the 90th calendar day for submitting an appeal falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal public holiday, an appeal received by 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, the next business day will be deemed timely.

Please contact my office at via email if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY
ROBERSON

Digitally signed by JEFFREY
ROBERSON
Date: 2022.11.22 08:55:33
-05'00'

Jeffrey Roberson
Freedom of Information Act Officer



E•D•A

U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

STRATEGIC PLAN FY21-25

U.S. Economic Development Administration

March 2021

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INTRODUCTION

As the only federal government agency focused exclusively on economic development, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) plays a critical role in facilitating regional economic development efforts through its portfolio of flexible investment mechanisms, mission-driven staff, and network of regionally-based partner organizations. The past several years have been a time of incredible growth and change at EDA. We effectively responded to increased mandates and scaled up our workforce to meet ever evolving and increasing economic development needs. This rapid growth and change have necessitated that we look internally to strengthen our agency and continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations.

Building on a series of organizational assessments and reviews conducted over the past two years, this Strategic Plan defines our enterprise priorities and serves as a shared roadmap for tackling critical areas of improvement and strengthening our position as a data- and evidence-driven agency demonstrating effective stewardship of public funds. It clarifies the strategic goals and objectives we aim to accomplish to advance our mission and articulates the specific related outcomes we are reaching for as well as the strategies that we will deploy to get there.

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT

To lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.

The U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) investment policy is designed to establish a foundation for sustainable job growth and the building of durable regional economies throughout the United States. This foundation builds upon two key economic drivers: innovation and regional collaboration. Innovation is key to global competitiveness, new and better jobs, a resilient economy, and the attainment of national economic goals. Regional collaboration is essential for economic recovery and prosperity because regions that work together to leverage resources and use their strengths to overcome weaknesses will fare better in a global economy than those that do not. EDA encourages its partners around the country to develop new ideas and creative approaches to address rapidly evolving economic conditions.

STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

EDA's strategic plan has been drafted through an iterative process with engagement from leadership and staff across EDA's functions and offices. EDA's strategic planning process has been informed by recent organizational assessments, business process reviews, and agency survey results.

To guide the strategic planning process and clarify desired outcomes and priorities over a 5-year time horizon, EDA developed dual definitions of success. Each of EDA's five strategic goals for 2021-2025 supports one of these two definitions of success.

Operational Excellence: EDA will excel as a steward of federal funds through continuous improvement in executing its competitive grant program, adapting and scaling based on changing economic development needs, and fostering an exceptional workplace.

Expanding Impact: EDA will consistently use data and evidence to strengthen its programs and will expand the reach and impact of its work to advance economic prosperity and resiliency in communities across the country.

After EDA's strategic priorities were defined by members of EDA leadership and management, EDA assembled a 10-member Strategy Tiger Team chaired by the EDA Chief Strategy Officer to articulate objectives, strategies, and initiatives for achieving EDA's goals. Drawing on perspectives from employees across the agency, the Strategy Tiger Team worked together to ensure that EDA's Strategic Plan is focused on its most important priorities, setting the agency up for success over the next five years and beyond.

To support execution of EDA's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, the Strategy Tiger Team also developed an Agency Performance Plan to serve as an action-oriented roadmap for implementing EDA's strategic goals and objectives in FY21-22. EDA will refresh the Agency Performance Plan annually based on new evidence and developments and this refresh also serves to update EDA's Strategic Plan.

In addition, to further provide clarity, transparency, and focus on accomplishing the agency's strategic goals and objectives, EDA has developed an initial strategy and performance management governance structure (detailed in Appendix A) that will foster collaborative leadership and staff engagement in strategy and performance management and build agency maturity in these areas.

EDA'S 2021-2025 STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Excel at the Customer-Centric Delivery of Economic Development Programs <i>EDA will support staff, program applicants, and grantees through efficient, customer-centric economic development program administration. The agency will fulfill its mission by demonstrating operational excellence that results in an efficient internal process and a high-caliber customer experience.</i>	
Objective 1: Increase process efficiency of EDA's program portfolio <i>EDA will streamline the program delivery processes and provide staff with relevant, modern tools to increase efficiency and reduce administrative burden.</i>	Strategies: A. Streamline and improve program delivery processes B. Modernize grants management technology
Objective 2: Consistently deliver a high-caliber pre-award and post-award customer experience <i>EDA will ensure that it consistently delivers economic development programs in a way that provides an outstanding pre-award and post-award experience for potential applicants and grantees.</i>	Strategies: A. Deepen understanding of customer experience B. Strengthen post-award support for grantees C. Strengthen pre-award support for applicants

Goal 2: Effectively Anticipate, Respond to, and Implement Change

EDA will operate as an agile organization that is able to respond to changing circumstances and evolving regional needs in a timely and efficient way. The agency will develop and strengthen internal capabilities in communication and collaboration, workforce agility, and planning and performance improvement to better position EDA to operate effectively and anticipate and address change.

Objective 1: Strengthen connectivity and collaboration across the agency

EDA will strengthen internal communication, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and knowledge management across all EDA offices to foster engagement, alignment, and awareness among employees while supporting regional and programmatic creativity.

Strategies:

- A.** Improve internal communications
- B.** Improve collaboration and knowledge management capabilities

Objective 2: Develop an agile, capable, and “right-sized” workforce

EDA will recruit, onboard, develop, support, and deploy staff to ensure a right-skilled and right-sized workforce to meet evolving mission needs.

Strategies:

- A.** Develop a strategic workforce plan
- B.** Flexibly deploy internal talent
- C.** Effectively leverage external talent

Objective 3: Establish a strong planning and performance improvement culture

EDA will strengthen, formalize, and align enterprise risk management, planning, programming, performance improvement, and budget formulation activities to continuously improve its operations and prepare for future challenges or shifts in priorities.

Strategies:

- A.** Improve strategic and operational planning
- B.** Improve capacity for continuous performance improvement
- C.** Improve identification and mitigation of risks

Goal 3: Foster an Exceptional Workplace that Attracts, Develops and Retains a Talented Workforce

EDA will drive high levels of employee satisfaction by fostering a workplace that is equitable, inclusive, empowering, and supportive of its employees.

Objective 1: Help all employees meet performance and professional goals

EDA will continuously evaluate employees' training and development needs and ensure that learning opportunities and effective performance coaching both enhance employees' professional development and strengthen their capabilities in order to best deliver on EDA's mission.

Strategies:

A. Strengthen employee participation in a suite of effective, relevant training and professional development opportunities

B. Strengthen performance coaching

Objective 2: Foster an innovative and transparent culture

EDA will equip and empower its employees to advance a culture of continuous improvement and innovation by elevating best practices and encouraging idea sharing and collaborative problem-solving.

Strategies:

A. Promote an environment where employee voices are heard and incorporated

B. Equip employees to innovate and problem solve

Objective 3: Promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace

EDA will develop a deeper understanding of the state of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the agency to promote a work environment that eliminates bias and ensures that all individuals feel safe, supported, and included.

Strategies:

A. Develop an understanding of the state of diversity, equity and inclusion within EDA and identify areas for improvement

B. Act on identified improvement opportunities

Objective 4: Provide an excellent internal customer experience for all employees

EDA will develop a comprehensive understanding of the employee experience to ensure that all employees have consistent access to the tools and services required to continuously excel in their roles.

Strategies:

A. Understand needs of internal customers

B. Improve internal service delivery

Goal 4: Use Data and Evidence to Strengthen the Impact of EDA Programs

EDA will deliver increased impact to the communities it serves by using internal and external data and evidence as the underpinning of its decision-making processes. EDA will use the guidelines in the Evidence Act as a basis for developing operational and strategic capabilities to apply data and evidence.

Objective 1: Strengthen EDA's data and analytics infrastructure

EDA will improve the infrastructure for gathering, analyzing, and disseminating high-quality data to provide staff and leadership across EDA with trusted, uniform, and easy-to-access data.

Strategies:

- A.** Ensure quality of EDA's data assets
- B.** Improve access to EDA's data assets and tools for data analysis

Objective 2: Strengthen evidence-building capabilities to inform economic development programs

EDA will regularly engage in activities such as program evaluation studies and research that will embed the capabilities to create and use evidence-based analysis.

Strategies:

- A.** Develop and publish a learning agenda
- B.** Strengthen EDA's organizational capacity to gather and synthesize evaluations and analysis

Objective 3: Expand the use of data and evidence to improve economic development outcomes

EDA leadership and staff will use insights from data and evidence to make strategic and operational decisions to promote desired outcomes for grantees and EDA.

Strategies:

- A.** Define and track actionable performance metrics/targets that promote desired outcomes for grantees and EDA
- B.** Equip employees to use available data and evidence
- C.** Incorporate data and evidence usage into EDA processes and establish a culture of data-driven decision making

Goal 5: Expand the Reach and Impact of EDA’s Work to Catalyze Economic Development

EDA will advance economic prosperity and resiliency in communities across the country by expanding equitable access to its programs and by integrating resources and knowledge. EDA will expand the amount and types of communities it is able to reach and strengthen its stakeholders’ capacity to optimize use of federal resources that promote an inclusive, equitable, and resilient economy.

Objective 1: Expand awareness of and access to EDA resources and results

EDA will increase the breadth and depth of engagement with all stakeholder groups (applicants, partners, economic development community, and governmental leadership) to promote equitable access to EDA resources by all eligible recipients.

Strategies:

A. Implement effective outreach and communications strategies incorporating data and technology tools

B. Promote equity by targeting and increasing access for underserved communities

C. Expand and build new partnerships with national, regional, and local stakeholders to reach a broad and diverse audience

Objective 2: Elevate EDA’s role as a resource and knowledge integrator for economic development

EDA will be a sought-after resource of economic development knowledge and best practices and will play a leading role in coordinating the federal government’s response to economic development needs.

Strategies:

A. Deploy EDA’s leading-edge insights along with external research to integrate and share knowledge with the economic development community and EDA stakeholders

B. Strengthen EDA’s capacity to convene other federal agencies for collaborative planning and program coordination to maximize assistance for local and regional economic development

APPENDIX A: STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE

Purpose

To align with the requirements of the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, EDA is establishing a strategy and performance management governance structure that helps ensure focus and drives progress on agency priorities. This governance structure defines roles and responsibilities for collaborative leadership and staff engagement in strategy and performance management and building agency maturity in these areas.

As a starting point in establishing this governance structure, EDA will stand-up an Organizational Excellence Task Force, under the championing of the Deputy Assistant Secretary / Chief Operating Officer, to guide and oversee the execution of critical organizational improvement strategic initiatives. The framework designed for this Task Force establishes a structure to ensure effective executive engagement in the agency strategic initiatives that were identified in FY21-22. It also helps structure for effective involvement of staff in the execution of agency organizational excellence and transformation priorities and thereby benefit from diverse perspectives and facilitate change management.

This overall governance structure is envisioned to evolve as the agency builds experience around strategy and performance management to further strengthen and align goal setting, leverage timely actionable performance information at all levels within the agency, and better integrate strategy and performance management with risk management and the budget process.

Roles and Responsibilities

Overall Task Force Sponsor:

The EDA Deputy Assistant Secretary / Chief Operating Officer (COO) serves as the overall Task Force Sponsor. In this role, the COO is responsible for providing overall vision and sponsorship of the transformational efforts to improve the agency's organizational excellence and performance. The Task Force Sponsor serves as the ultimate decision maker for the issues of the Task Force.

Task Force Co-Chairs:

The EDA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs and the Chief Financial Officer / Chief Administrative Officer serve as the Task Force Co-Chairs. In this role, they will engage Task Force members and the Executive Director in aligning and prioritizing EDA-wide organizational excellence and transformation efforts. They will oversee Task Force discussions to ensure that issues related to the execution of the organizational excellence strategic initiatives are effectively analyzed and clear recommendations are developed and proposed to the COO. They will ensure that existing agency structures are leveraged (e.g., existing working groups, intra-agency committees, etc.) in support of the work of Strategic Initiative Teams and will champion the implementation and integration of strategic initiative deliverables into agency business operations.

Task Force Executive Director:

The EDA Chief Strategy Officer serves as the Task Force Executive Director. In this role, the CSO plans, formulates, and guides the work of the Task Force and in collaboration with the Task Force Chairs, develops meeting agendas, and coordinates the successful execution of Task Force meetings. In addition, the CSO will also collaborate with the Strategic Initiative Executive Co-Champions to

guide and support the design, planning, execution, and communication of the strategic initiatives. The CSO also serves as overall advisor on change management associated with the EDA Strategic Plan and its associated strategic initiatives.

Task Force Members/ Initiative Executive Champions:

The Task Force membership is composed of the Executive Champions for each of the strategic initiatives. The Executive Champions will provide strategic insight and direction to the initiative teams to support their progress toward achieving identified initiative milestones and results. The Executive Champions will also ensure that the Strategic Initiative Leads and Teams working on these initiatives have the guidance and support to make progress, identify and mitigate risks, and overcome barriers. The Executive Champions will also help the Strategic Initiative Leads navigate discussions with the relevant Department of Commerce offices. They will report on the progress of these initiatives at Task Force meetings, sharing status and lead discussion of challenges and proposed solutions, as appropriate.

Strategic Initiative Leads:

The Strategic Initiative Lead is responsible for defining and leading execution of the initiative plan, with support from a Strategic Initiative Team. The lead will collaborate with all team members, organize initiative team meetings, and keep the team focused and on track, assigning and monitoring completion of team and individual tasks. The lead will also, on at least a monthly basis, share progress, risks, and challenges of initiative implementation with the initiative Executive Champions.

Strategic Initiative Teams:

Strategic Initiatives Teams have cross-functional representation from multiple HQ offices and Regional Offices who bring specific management and/or technical skills and experience relevant to the initiative scope. The team members collaborate with the Strategic Initiative Lead to develop and execute an implementation plan, leveraging organizational strengths and identifying and mitigating risks throughout implementation; carry out specific activities of the initiative implementation plan, individually or collectively; and identify change management considerations to facilitate the implementation of strategic initiative products into agency operations.



EDA Strategic Workforce Plan Initiative

Initiative Co-leads: Quinn Henderson (OFMS) & Marguerite McKinley (PRO)

Initiative Team Members (IPT): Asa Williams (ATRO), Laura Ostenso (OFMS), Kim Trimble (OFMS), Patrick Lydic (AuRO), Sharon Metiva (SRO), Ilana Valinsky (ORA), David Riedel (ORA), Justin Jones (CRO), Jamie Hackbarth (DRO), Jason Wilson (AuRO), Lesley Craig (CRO), David Ives (ORA), Richard Berndt (SRO), April Campbell (OFMS)

Initiative Executive Champions: Mara Campbell (OAS), Susan Brehm (CRO), Philip Paradise (ATRO)

September 2021

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Introduction

Background

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) launched a **Holistic EDA Workforce Strategy Initiative** in February 2021 to ensure that the agency remains able to recruit, develop, deploy, and retain a skilled workforce to meet evolving mission demands. While this initiative was specifically called out as part of a set of strategic initiatives identified in EDA's Strategic Plan FY 21-25 and Performance Plan FY 21-22, the challenges facing EDA that necessitated this initiative have been present for several years before the recent strategic plan.

As a small agency with a large mission—EDA is the only federal government agency focused exclusively on economic development—EDA has historically had to find creative ways to maximize its impact with a limited workforce. Recent years have further increased the scale of EDA's mission in significant ways, starting with EDA being tasked with disbursing \$1.2B in disaster relief funding in 2018-2019 in response to various natural disasters, and continuing with a collective \$4.5B in funding for COVID relief in 2020-2021 (for perspective, EDA has averaged just over \$300M in annual funding over the last five years outside of these supplementals). These large increases have made it clear that EDA requires a comprehensive workforce plan to best support mission execution, something that has been identified both externally (including by GAO and the Department of Commerce OIG, as seen in the latter's November 2019 report *EDA Should Develop a Workforce Plan and Improve its Hiring Accountability to Successfully Award and Administer the Disaster Supplemental Funds Appropriated by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018*) and internally (operational risks related to workforce appear twice in EDA's initial enterprise risk matrix developed in August 2020).

EDA's Performance Plan FY 21-22 specifically chartered the Workforce Initiative to develop a Workforce Plan in response to two goals/objectives:

- Goal 2: Effectively Anticipate, Respond to, and Implement Change; Objective 2: Develop an agile, capable, and “right-sized” workforce – EDA will recruit, onboard, develop, support, and deploy staff to ensure a right-skilled and right-sized workforce to meet evolving mission needs
- Goal 3: Foster an Exceptional Workplace that Attracts, Develops, and Retains a Talented Workforce; Objective 1: Help all employees meet performance and professional goals – EDA will continuously evaluate employees' training and development needs and ensure that learning opportunities and effective performance coaching both enhance employees' professional development and strengthen their capabilities in order to best deliver on EDA's mission

Methodology

A 14-person cross-functional Integrated Project Team (“IPT,” but referred to as “the team” in the remainder of the document) was established with representation across all six regional offices (ROs) and headquarters staff, guided by two co-lead members and three executive champions, to gather and assess qualitative and quantitative data to develop this workforce plan. This team met from March to September 2021 to provide insights via a series of regular workshops. The team also leveraged other data sources, including surveys, interviews, and small group discussions with additional EDA staff members, data from the formal Business Process Review (BPR) conducted in 2020, Employee Exit Survey data, Pulse data and FEVs reports.

The specific analyses performed by the team can be thought of as belonging to one of three “phases” of activity, which build upon each other and form the structure of this Workforce Plan:

- Current Workforce Composition: describing the current state baseline of EDA’s workforce, this information is foundational to understanding how EDA’s workforce executes the mission today and helps identify trends that may impact the future ability of EDA’s workforce to execute the mission
- Desired Workforce Composition: defining what EDA needs from its workforce to effectively support its mission, with a recognition that this may be different than the current workforce baseline. This analysis focused on three key drivers that, taken together, form the foundation of whether EDA’s workforce will be able to successfully execute its growing mission:
 - **Competency Needs**: the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required of EDA’s workforce to effectively execute the responsibilities that drive EDA’s day-to-day mission execution
 - **Role Definition**: the categorization and organization of responsibilities into discrete job titles, determined with an emphasis on ensuring efficient and effective execution of said responsibilities while also ensuring individuals have clarity on what is expected of them and the career path they can follow
 - **Workforce Demand**: the volume and type of work EDA expects to be responsible for, and its implication for the size and type of workforce needed
- Strategies to Achieve & Maintain Desired Workforce Composition: identifying improvement opportunities for how EDA might attract, develop, and retain the desired workforce described above:
 - **Hiring and Recruiting**: how to fill staffing needs, both through traditional hiring and other creative methods of staffing/deployment
 - **Training and Development**: how to provide individuals with the tools and knowledge they need to be successful in their roles
 - **Performance Management**: how to ensure individuals remain engaged and motivated, supporting morale and high-quality work
 - **Succession Planning and Supervisor Development**: how to ensure that mission execution is not reliant on any one individual or set of individuals, both at the leadership and management levels and within line staff

The remainder of this document will share the results of the team’s analysis across each of these three “phases,” with recommendations identified for EDA leadership consideration across the three Desired Workforce Composition components and four Strategies to Achieve & Maintain Desired Workforce Composition components (though note that the accompanying appendix captures additional detail in several areas). At a summary level, the team identified significant gaps in each of the above seven components, with an inconsistent foundation supporting EDA’s Desired Workforce Composition and ad hoc and immature processes supporting the Strategies to Achieve & Maintain Desired Workforce Composition. The nature of several of the team’s recommendations will require focused energy and/or political will to successfully implement, speaking to the importance of executing next steps to best leverage this report.

Next Steps

Comparing the work performed by the team to OPM's five-step workforce planning process, the team acknowledges that this document has only attempted to address the first three steps:

- Step 1: Determine Strategic Direction
- Step 2: Forecast Workforce Requirements, Analyze Current Workforce, and Determine Competency and Staffing Gaps
- Step 3: Develop Action Plans
- Step 4: Implement Action Plans
- Step 5: Monitor, Evaluate, and Revise

This Workforce Plan report provides analysis and recommendations for consideration, but it will only lead to improved EDA outcomes if the remaining OPM steps are followed. The recommendations identified here benefit from the input of multiple EDA stakeholders with varying perspectives and also reflect industry best practices—nevertheless, the team recognizes that further EDA leadership discussion, and potentially further analysis, will be needed to decide which recommendations to implement (Step #4 of the OPM process). Given the sensitive nature of workforce-related concerns, buy-in across the leadership team will be crucial to the successful implementation of many of the recommendations.

Current Workforce Composition

Overview

Accounting for less than 1% of the Department of Commerce by headcount, EDA's ~297 staff make it a relatively small agency within the DOC as of July 2021. EDA's staff are distributed across six regional offices – Atlanta, Austin, Chicago, Denver, Philadelphia, and Seattle – plus a headquarters in Washington, D.C., where approximately 40% of its staff are located. Combined, EDA's regional offices provide economic development coverage for the entirety of the United States. Each office's geography presents its own unique challenges to EDA's economic development mission in that region. Each regional office must shepherd its staffing resources as effectively as possible within the framework of its geographic footprint in order to best support its local communities.

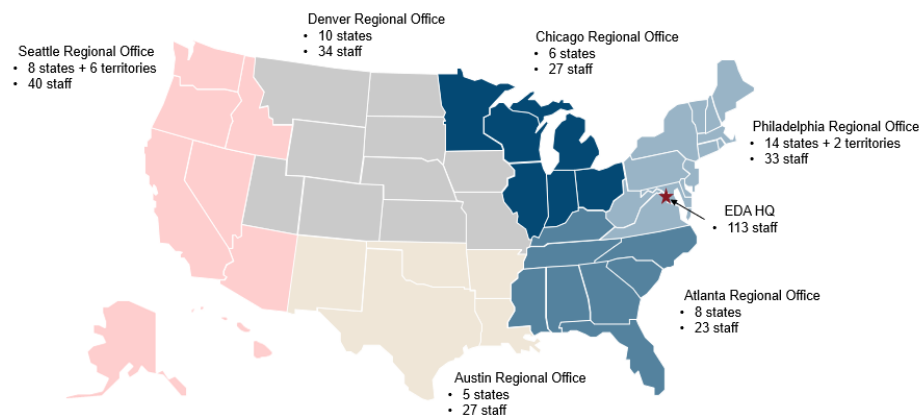


Figure 1 - EDA Staff by Regional Office (July 2021) [Including Contractors]

EDA's headcount has increased rapidly in recent years, growing approximately 64% since 2018 alone. Much of this growth is related to the 2020 CARES Act, which provided EDA with special hiring exemption to hire term employees to help process the ~\$1.5 billion funding supplemental provided by Congress through the Act itself. This growth trajectory is expected to continue in the immediate future, as the recent passage of the 2021 ARP Act provided EDA with an additional \$3 billion funding supplemental and extended the Agency's special hiring exemption. The impact of recent funding infusion is already being seen at EDA, for even though only approximately ten employees have already been hired for ARPA positions, a large number of EDA's 90 current vacancies have been created specifically for ARPA hiring and will be filled in the coming months.

EDA's overall employee landscape has been heavily impacted by CARES and ARP act funding in other ways as well. One such area is EDA's demographic mix. For the first time in recent years, women comprise the majority of EDA employees. A large generational shift has occurred too, as EDA's recent term hiring efforts have led to a large influx in younger employees. Today, Millennials and Generation X employees comprise roughly two thirds of EDA's workforce, although a significant portion of these individuals have been hired as term staff and may attrit in several years. Finally, recent hiring has led to a notable shift in the educational attainment of EDA's workforce. 2020 saw a dramatic increase in both the number and

proportion of individuals at EDA whose highest degree is a high school diploma, according to EDA's internal HR records¹.

Despite the changes caused by EDA's recent hiring activity, however, long-term trends continue to impact EDA's workforce – particularly regarding retirement eligibility among EDA's permanent employees. Today, roughly a quarter of EDA's permanent employees have reached retirement eligibility; above half will be able to retire in the next ten years. This represents a serious knowledge turnover risk for EDA, as EDA has no procedures in place to capture knowledge from retirement-eligible employees before they leave the agency.

An overview of EDA's current workforce landscape can be found in Figure 2, below.

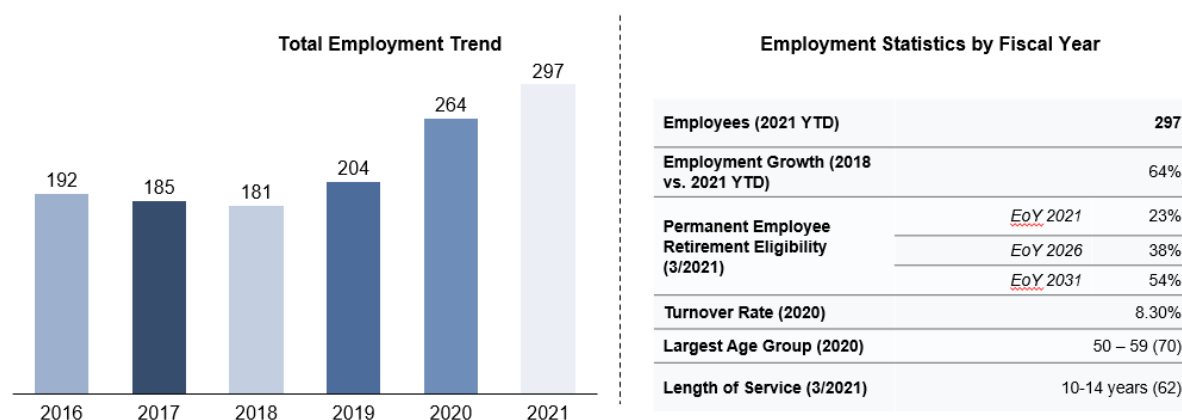


Figure 2 - EDA Employment Overview. Data calculated using total staff data (perm + term (inc. political) + contractors) for all figures except retirement eligibility

Staff by Employment Type (Permanent/Term/Contractor)

As of July 2021, EDA's staffing structure is comprised of three types of staff: permanent employees, term employees², and contractors. These employment classifications are leveraged in varying capacities across regional offices to support grants management functions. EDA's three-pronged structure provides the Agency with the flexibility to react to unforeseen events to meet the needs of the communities it serves. However, it also provides EDA with a set of challenges that it must consider when evaluating current and future-state staffing supply. EDA's staffing of contractors and term employees in particular – who collectively comprise roughly 40% of EDA's current total workforce – creates a relatively unique set of circumstances that EDA should keep in mind throughout the course of its workforce planning efforts.

Contractors at EDA can generally be defined within one of two categories – *support service* contractors and *staff augmentation* contractors. In the past several years, the time period from which data for this initiative was drawn, both of these groups have been staffed by EDA in limited capacities.

¹ An internal audit can be performed to validate these figures

² EDA's small number of political appointees are tallied as term employees.

Within this context, support service contractors have been staffed by EDA predominantly within the headquarters offices to aid with targeted projects in a narrow capacity. As of July 2021, EDA staffed twelve of these individuals, all within the Office of Finance and Management Services. This group was comprised of 7 IT Support Contractors, 2 IT Program Manager Contractors, 1 CRM Manager Contractor, 1 ITSD Support Contractor, and 1 ISSO Contractor. These individuals do not appear to be involved in the day-to-day process of grants management and, as a result, *fall outside the primary focus of this workforce plan.*

Staff augmentation contractors, however, have been predominantly staffed within the regional offices and *are* regularly involved in the day-to-day process of grants management. *These individuals will be the primary point of reference whenever the term “contractor” is used throughout the remainder of this document.* As of July 2021, EDA staffed nine of these individuals across its regional offices and two within the Office of Regional Affairs. At the regional office level, this group was comprised of 4 Civil Engineer Contractors, 3 Environmental Contractors, and 2 EDS Contractors. Within the Office of Regional Affairs, the two contractors staffed were Data Analyst Contractors within TAAD. Collectively, these staff augmentation contractor numbers represent an increase from what was documented during EDA’s 2019 – 2020 Business Process Review engagement, at which point the Seattle Regional Office had just begun to onboard staff augmentation contractors as a means of circumventing EDA’s slow hiring processes and other regional offices had yet to follow suit.³ (Note that the team is unable to discern the precise number or types of contractors onboard at EDA prior to July 2021 due to data granularity constraints.)

Since the BPR, the Agency’s ability to easily onboard staff augmentation contractors has allowed it to quickly ‘staff up’ in response to several unexpected surges in workload that have occurred in recent years – most notably workload related to EDA’s 2017 and 2019 disaster funding supplementals. This was particularly useful during periods when EDA did not have access to exempt Schedule A hiring authority, which was recently provided to the Agency on a temporary basis under the CARES and ARP Acts as a means of helping the agency respond to the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.⁴ Regardless, EDA’s use of contractors does pose notable drawbacks to the Agency, such as them being unable to perform some inherently governmental functions associated with the grants process (and the resulting reliance of them on full time government employees) or the unpredictable, potentially short-term nature of their staffing. Another notable drawback of contractor staffing is the Agency’s noted inability to pay for any formal training required by the individuals that staff those positions. This had led to EDA’s contractors being required to engage in a high amount of proactive, on-the-job training in their daily work in order to acquire the skills they need to perform their jobs. (For more on this specific issue, see the section of this document titled, “Training and Development.”)

Unlike contractors, EDA has hired and leveraged **term employees** extensively over the past two years. Since the BPR, these individuals were hired as full-time employees on fixed-length contracts using money set aside in supplemental funding allocations (Disaster 1, Disaster 2, CARES, ARP) and are staffed under the terms and conditions contained therein. EDA does budget about 2% of total supplemental for salary and expenses, and EDA does have some discretion over how that money is used to pay for staff (quantity,

³ More on this pain point can be found in the section of this document titled “Recruiting & Hiring.”

⁴ Ibid.

type, location, etc.). That being said, as of July 2021, term employees comprise roughly 33% of EDA’s workforce.⁵

Generally speaking, EDA’s term employees (many of whom work in grants management) function similarly to EDA’s permanent employees in their day-to-day operations, although their staffing does present a few notable considerations that are worth mentioning. EDA’s use of term contractors presents a tangential benefit to the Agency in terms of its effort to backfill employees. Term hires are able to absorb knowledge from their tenured peers while working with them on a day-to-day basis prior to the tenured peers’ retirements (a type of attrition which will occur frequently at EDA over the next five years – see the subsection titled “Retirement Eligibility,” below). This means that EDA’s term employees can be particularly useful to EDA when it moves to backfill permanent hire positions. EDA’s term staff typically are assigned work that is related to the supplemental funding program that they were hired under which presents some challenges to EDA leadership. However, the use of these term employees to fill these vacancies cannot always be guaranteed and is limited by the number of term employees available at any given moment. Additionally, knowledge captured by EDA’s term hires can only be leveraged if full-time roles are available for them to compete (for Disaster 1 and 2 hires but CARES and ARP hires will not have to compete if they are converted to permanent hires) while they are employed at the Agency. This is particularly important because term hires – who are often employed on contracts that are just a few years in length – often lack a feeling of job security and can move to leave the agency in favor of other stable, long-term offers prior to the end of their terms and term hires may not make a federal certification list even after extensive knowledge gain. Given EDA’s current outsize reliance on term hires (due to CARES and ARP funding allocations), these considerations are particularly important.

Detailed, office-by-office breakdowns of EDA’s per-category staffing figures can be found below.

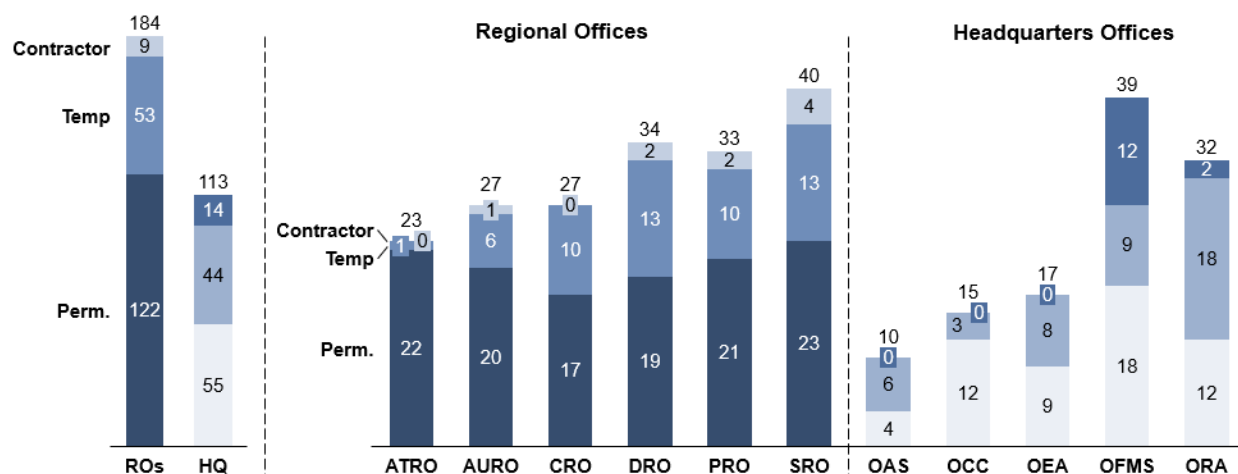


Figure 3 – EDA Staff Employment Type Totals (July 2021)

⁵ More information on the hiring of these individuals can be found in the section of this document titled “Recruiting and Hiring.”

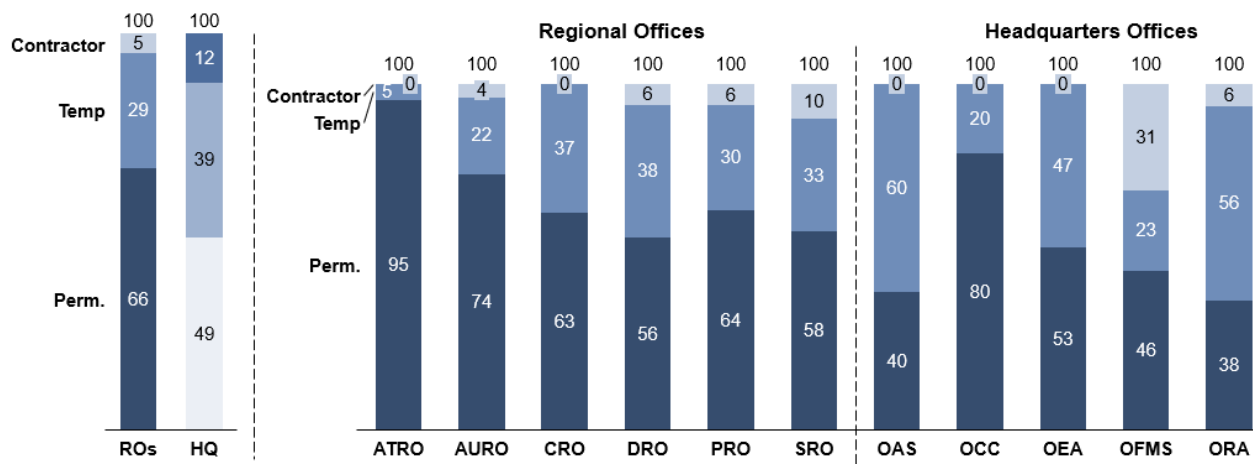


Figure 4 - EDA Staff Employment Type Percentages (July 2021)

Staff by Classification by Role, Grade, and Occupational Series

Role

The composition of each EDA regional office varies in terms of its overall number of staff as well as the type and number of positions that are staffed in it. Regional Directors play a significant role in determining the FTE staffed within their office but approval for staffing levels is done by HQ after budgetary and agency considerations, regional directors are largely responsible for the classification breakdowns seen in each.

The table below showcases the role breakdown of each Regional Office. Notable role allocation differences can be seen across offices at both the Management and Line Staff level. As an example, regional offices differ markedly in the number of Area Directors / Supervisory Managers that they staff. The same type of quantitative differences can be seen between offices in terms of the number of EDSs staffed. These allocation differences are indicative of the significant strategic idiosyncrasy that exists between regional offices, particularly with regard to role definition (which will be explored in more detail in this Workforce Plan's "Role Definition" section).

Table 1 - EDA Role Breakdown by Regional Office (July 2021)

	ATRO	AURO	CRO	DRO	PRO	SRO
Management						
<i>Regional Director</i>	1	1	1	1	1	0
<i>Area Director + SPM</i>	1	2	2	2	4	4
<i>Administrative Director</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1
Line Staff						
<i>EDR</i>	8	5	5	8	7	9
<i>EDS + Comm. Planner</i>	2	7	9	10	8	11
<i>Civil Engineer + CPM</i>	3	6	4	4	5	5
<i>Analyst (All Types) + EDA + Admin Specialist</i>	4	3	2	4	4	4
<i>EPS + Environmental Officer</i>	2	0	2	1	0	1
<i>EDI</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1
Totals	23	26	27	32	31	36

Grade

In terms of staff grading, EDA is relatively ‘top-heavy’ compared to other federal agencies, with GS-13 being the most common employee grade and *80% of all EDA staff falling at or above GS-12*. This is in stark contrast to federal averages, whereby nearly 50% of all federal employees fall *at or below GS-11* according to the Federal Figures established by the Partnership for Public Service. This high grading average has downstream effects in regional offices, where very few staff are employed at grade levels below GS-12, and relatively expensive staffing resources may take on more administrative or processing tasks that could be handled by others.

Within the regional offices, ‘top-heavy’ grading is particularly notable in Atlanta which also has the smallest FTE staffing footprint but has one of the largest program allocations, which has nearly seven employees ranked at GS-13 and above for each employee ranked at GS-12 and below. Disregarding Atlanta, however, four other regional offices (Austin, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Seattle) all have more than two such GS-13 and above employees for each employee ranked GS-12 and below. (Denver is the only regional office that is currently staffing >GS-13 and <GS-12 employees near parity.) This fact is particularly striking when considering that recent term hiring performed by EDA under the CARES and ARP Acts has at least temporarily inflated the Agency’s number of lower-grade hires on a short-term basis.

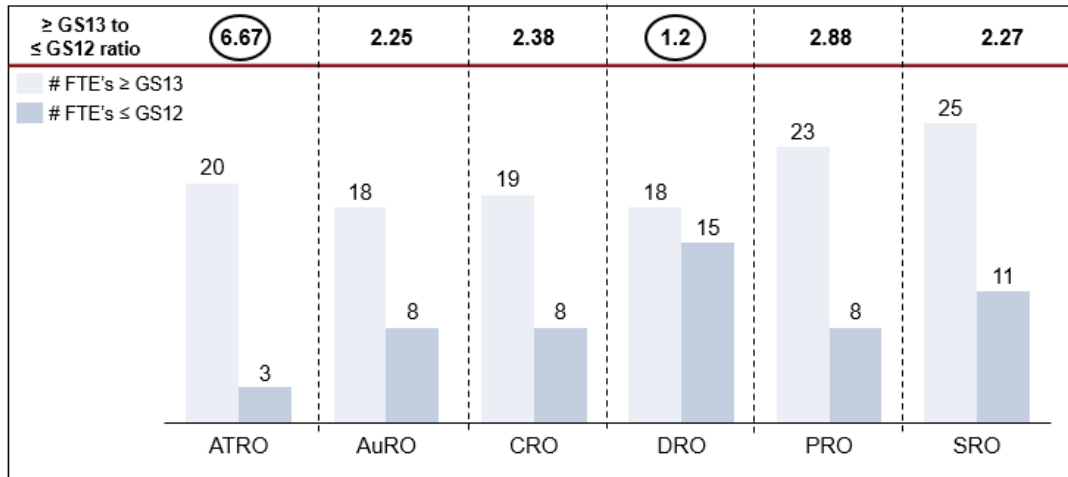


Figure 5 - EDA FTE Staff Grading Ratios by Regional Office (July 2021)

A regional office breakdown of EDA's grading allocation numbers can be found below.

Table 2 - EDA FTE Staff Grading Numbers by Regional Office (July 2021)

	ATRO	AURO	CRO	DRO	PRO	SRO
ES	1	1	1	1	1	0
GS-15	1	2	1	1	2	2
GS-14	1	1	3	2	3	3
GS-13	17	14	14	13	17	20
GS-12	1	1	2	8	5	6
G-11 and Below	2	7	6	7	3	5
Totals	23	26	27	32	31	36

Occupational Series

EDA staffs a broad set of occupational series across its offices. Regardless, four occupational series comprise the large majority of staff across its regional offices. In descending order of occurrence, these four series are:

- 1101 - General Business and Industry
 - Key EDA Titles in this Occupation Series: EDR, EDS
- 0301 - Miscellaneous Administration and Program
 - Key EDA Titles in this Occupation Series: Regional Director, Area Director, Admin Director
- 0810 – Civil Engineering
- 0343 – Management and Program Analysis
 - Key EDA Titles in this Occupation Series: Management Analyst, Program Analyst

With the exception of 0810, these series are notable in large part for their non-descript, catch-all nature. These series reflect the fact that EDA’s core roles may have been designed with flexibility in mind (and thus were not assigned to more defined occupational series). Notably absent from the EDA regional offices’ list of most common occupational series is the 1109 Grants Management Series, whose absence reflects a past era in which a significant portion of EDA’s grant staff were expected to play utility roles that were not restricted solely to grants management. (More information can be found on the 1109 Grants Management series, and the potential for EDA to leverage it in future staffing, in the “Role Definition” section of this Workforce Plan.)

A detailed EDA Regional Office occupational series breakdown can be found below.

Table 3 - EDA Regional Office Occupational Series Breakdown (July 2021)

	1101	0301	0810	0343	0028	0020	0303
ATRO	10	4	3	4	2	0	0
AURO	12	4	6	4	0	0	0
CRO	14	5	3	3	2	0	0
DRO	17	5	4	4	1	1	0
PRO	15	6	5	5	0	0	0
SRO	19	5	5	4	1	1	1
Total	87	29	26	24	6	2	1

Annual Attrition & Hiring Trends

Attrition

The number of departures of EDA staff increased steadily between 2018 and 2021 (the most recent attrition data available). Most of this increase in departures was caused by separations unrelated to retirements (i.e., individuals who left for any number of reasons prior to reaching retirement eligibility). Of total departures reviewed during this period, of note are those employees who were employed by the agency for more than 10 years. Data suggests that while a small group of less than 10 tenured employees responded, they were appreciative of the agency's commitment to customer service, supporting work-life balance and recognition for a job well done, however, these respondents identified several reasons for their departure including the lack of growth opportunity, training (new hire and economic development for all employees), antiquated tools, and their work environment (including challenges with their management). These concerns (except for tools) are supported by recommendations throughout specific sections of this document.

Despite this increase in the raw number of separations between 2019 and 2020, EDA's attrition rate actually *declined* slightly in 2020 due to the fact that EDA's overall staff size was much higher following the addition of its many CARES Act hires.⁶ EDA's annual attrition rate could increase over the next several years as some of EDA's recent term hires reach the end of their terms (CARES hires in 2022 and ARPA hires between 2023 and 2027) and the full impact of EDA's departures is no longer offset by an overall increase in staff supply.

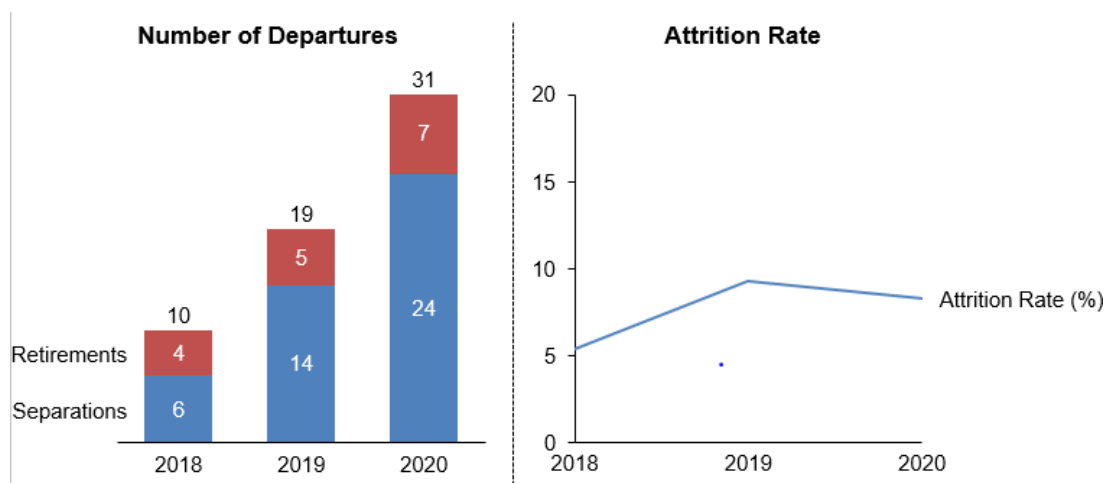


Figure 6 - EDA FTE Attrition (2018 - 2020)

⁶ This means that although the total number of people leaving EDA increased in 2020 as compared to 2019, the number of people who departed in 2020 represented a smaller percentage of EDA's employees than did the number of people who departed in 2019.

Retirement Eligibility

Roughly 25% of EDA's permanent staff were eligible to retire in March 2021. Nearly 40% will be eligible within the next five years. These would-be retirees represent a significant portion of EDA's long-term permanent employees and, accordingly, hold a significant amount of EDA's institutional knowledge.

Permanent Employee Retirement Eligibility Outlook (3/2021)	<i>EoY 2021</i>	23%
	<i>EoY 2026</i>	38%
	<i>EoY 2031</i>	54%

Figure 7 - EDA Permanent Employee Retirement Eligibility Outlook (As of March 2021)

Today, EDA's workforce finds itself at an inflection point. Many long-term EDA employees, largely from the Baby Boomer Generation, are reaching retirement eligibility and beginning to depart the Agency, with their vacancies generally being filled by individuals from Generation X or, increasingly, the Millennial Generation. These younger-generation employees, many of whom have joined the Agency in a short span of time to support the CARES Act, bring with themselves a differing set of backgrounds and expectations than those who have been with EDA for years. In the years ahead, EDA will have to grapple with the implications of this dramatic change in workforce composition, which is likely to be exacerbated by additional hiring performed through the ARP Act.

Current Vacancies

At present, EDA has approximately 90 vacancies, a figure which comprises roughly 25% of the Agency's total staff capacity. Approximately 70% of these vacancies – 63 in total – represent term FTEs that have yet to be filled. These vacancies reflect the fact that EDA has already begun to process grant money related to the ARP Act and is beginning to staff additional resources to process the corresponding spike in workload. The immediate impact of this is seen most readily in EDA's Office of the Assistant Secretary, which is (for the first time in recent memory) beginning to staff programmatic FTEs that will be leveraged to help support extra grant workload across the regional offices. The following visuals provide a breakdown of these vacancies.

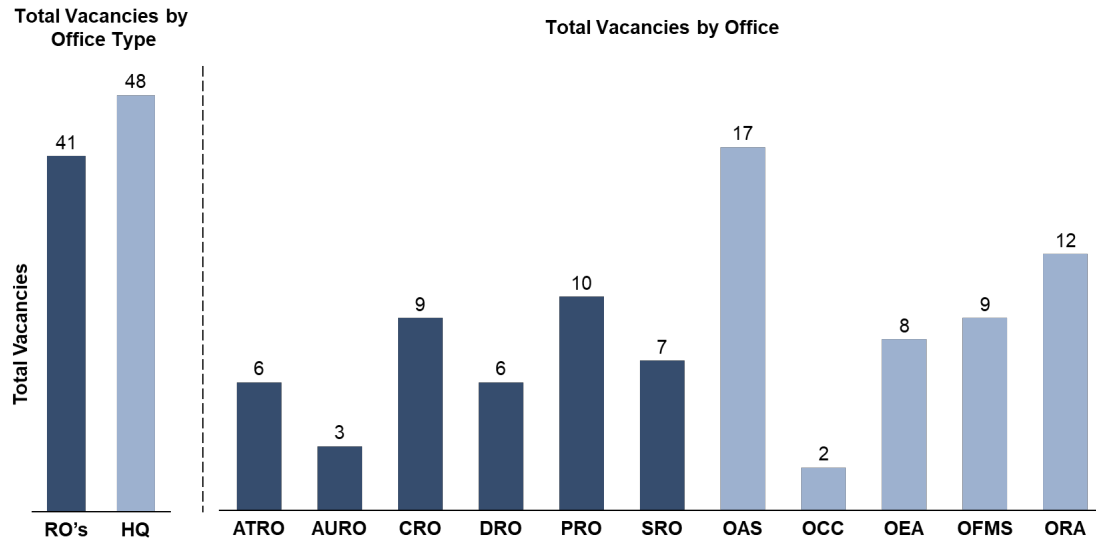


Figure 8 - Total Vacancies by Office Type / Office (July 2021)

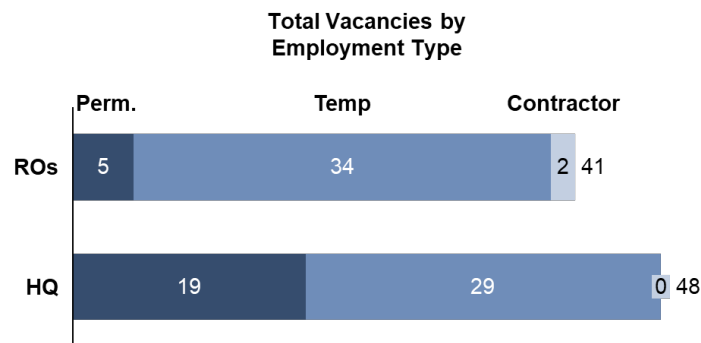


Figure 9- Total Vacancies by Office Type / Employment Type (July 2021)

Staff Diversity

EDA's workforce has undergone notable improvements in diversity over the past five years, both regarding its permanent and temporary hires. This positive change has occurred even as EDA's workforce has expanded in size due to the CARES and ARP Acts. EDA's improvements to workforce diversity are reflected both through top-line DOC Diversity Index measurements as well as individual workforce diversity metrics.

Diversity Index

The **Diversity Index (DI)** is a single measure of workforce diversity. It is based on the average of 14 Inclusion rate indicators that are distributed by gender, race, ethnicity, and national origin (RNO).

Permanent Workforce Diversity Index: EDA had 173 permanent employees in FY21 Q1, compared to 176 in FY16. Despite the relatively stable number of permanent employees over this time, there was an increase in EDA's permanent workforce Diversity Index. This indicates that the improvement in the diversity of EDA's permanent workforce over this time was driven by turnover – the employees who left EDA between FY2016 and FY2021 were replaced by individuals who were on average more diverse in terms of their gender, race, ethnicity, and national origin.

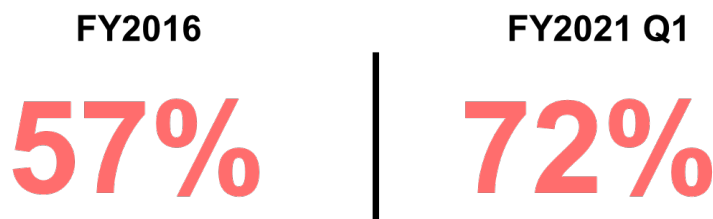


Figure 10 - EDA Permanent Workforce Diversity Index

Temporary Workforce Diversity Index: EDA had 102 temporary employees at the time of this Diversity Index calculation in FY21 Q1, compared to just 15 in FY16. During this period, there was a significant, 36 percentage point increase in EDA's temporary workforce Diversity Index. The increased hiring opportunities that EDA was afforded by the CARES Act likely allowed it to onboard a relatively diverse set of workers all at once. EDA's workforce strategy will likely want to consider the effects of the wave of CARES Act hires on their overall organizational diversity, because it is possible that many CARES Act hires will leave EDA at the end of their terms in and around 2022 (although some of these individuals will be rolled into permanent budgets in FY22 / FY23).

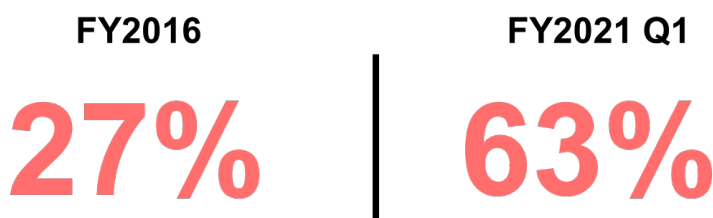


Figure 11 - EDA Temporary Workforce Diversity Index

Other Workforce Diversity Metrics

The Department of Commerce developed a Disparity Scale to measure the significance of workforce disparities. This scale, broken into 3 categories, provides scores of Minimum, Moderate, and Marked to identify the difference in percentage between 2 data numbers (Civil Labor Force and actual data). These scores are a result of data falling within a range of 0-10%, 10-20% and 20% or more respectively and are used to help the agency understand if they are on par or falling below benchmarks.

Gender: Over the past several years, EDA's gender and ethnic composition ratios have remained relatively stable, with the former hovering near 1-to-1 females to males (see Figure 12). Regardless, 2020 was the first year in recent memory in which EDA had more female than male staff. For example, in comparing to the DOC CLF benchmarks, males are slightly below or on par with the Disparity Scale of 51.68%, while females have exceeded benchmark goals of 48.14% in the chart below.

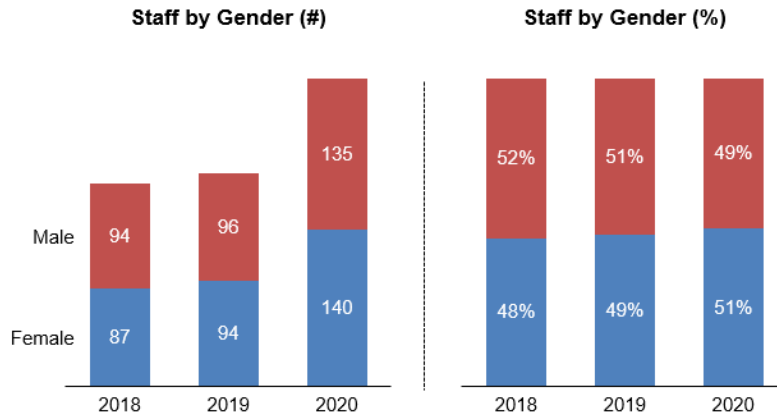


Figure 12 - EDA Workforce Gender Breakdown (2018 - 2020)

Age: In a significant deviation from recent years, hiring in 2020 saw a sharp spike in the number and percentage of Millennials working at EDA. Additionally, for the first time, Millennials have greater representation at EDA than do Baby Boomers. Although this sudden change in workforce composition was driven in large part by recent CARES Act hiring, this overall trend is likely to continue as EDA’s permanent hire Baby Boomers continue to retire, Gen X’ers take their place, and an increasing number of Millennials are hired to fill more junior ranks. As younger generations can bring very different expectations and preferences in terms of training methods, management and coaching styles, and use of technology, this change could be rather impactful for EDA, especially given how quickly it is occurring.

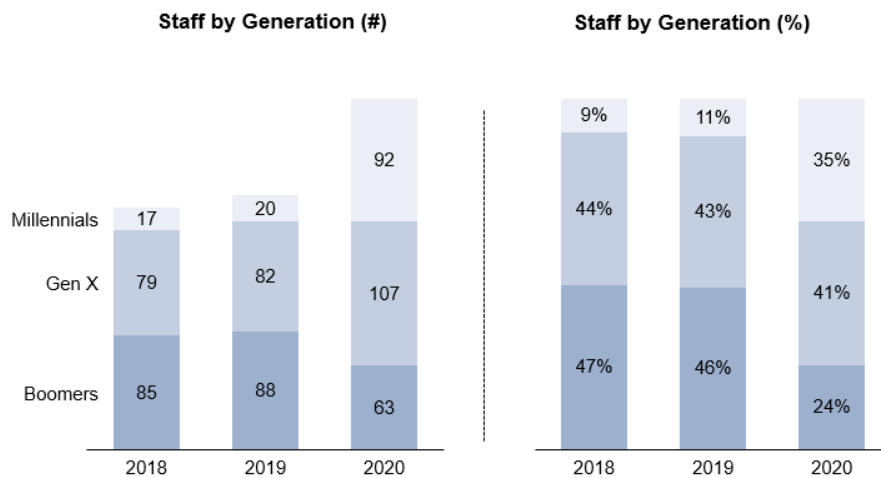


Figure 13 - EDA Workforce Age Breakdown (2018 - 2020)

Ethnicity: The majority of EDA’s workforce identifies as White whereas less than one quarter of the workforce is Black or African American. Regardless, ethnic diversity remained relatively stable as EDA’s workforce grew significantly in size between 2018 and 2020. According to the most recent “State of the Agency” report from DOC April 2021, groups that are below the ULF benchmark on the DOC Disparity Scale

of more than 20% includes Hispanic Males, White Females, NHPI Males and Females and those who identify as having 2+ races. This indicates areas for EDA to monitor and look to improve.

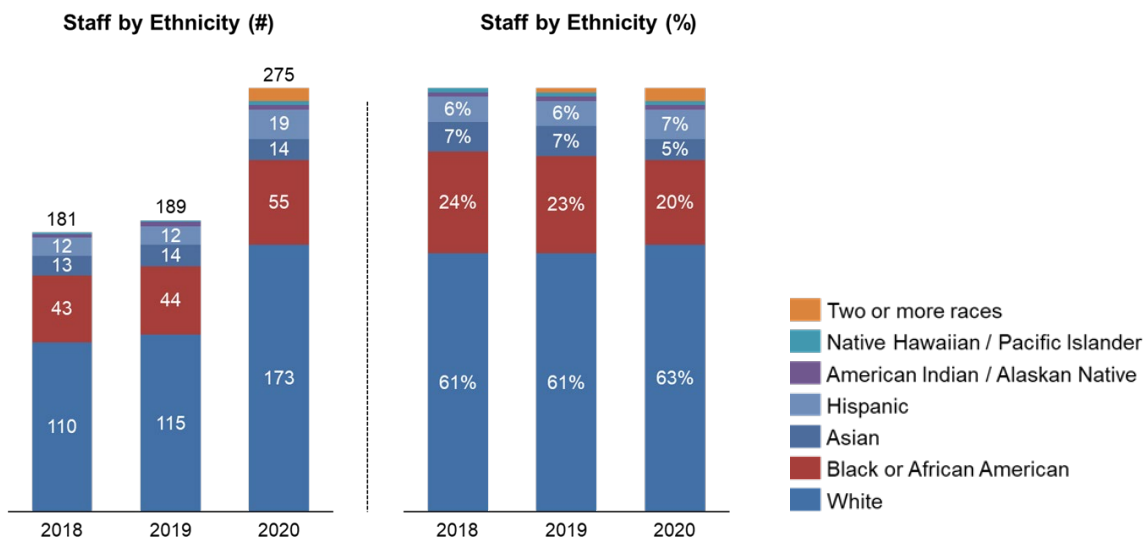


Figure 14 - EDA Workforce Ethnicity Breakdown (2018 - 2020)

When reviewing EDA staff diversity of gender, race, and ethnicity by GS level, several trends are notable. Figures 15 -17 below highlight that Black, Hispanic, and persons with 2 or more races are most represented at the GS 13 level. White men represent a plurality in all categories, particularly in the GS-13 level with 73% representation. Equally, this group leads all executive positions up to SES roles. Conversely, all males of color in these groups represent 27% *collectively*. Greater representation exists among Black women (Figure 16), comprising 27% of GS 13 positions (versus 14% Black males). Black women also are 60% of GS 14 levels, leading the diversity mix for that group, although falling off considerably at GS 15 levels and SES levels respectively. Notably, White women lead both GS 15 and SES categories. Hispanic and Asian groups are minimally represented regardless of gender among GS 14 positions and above.

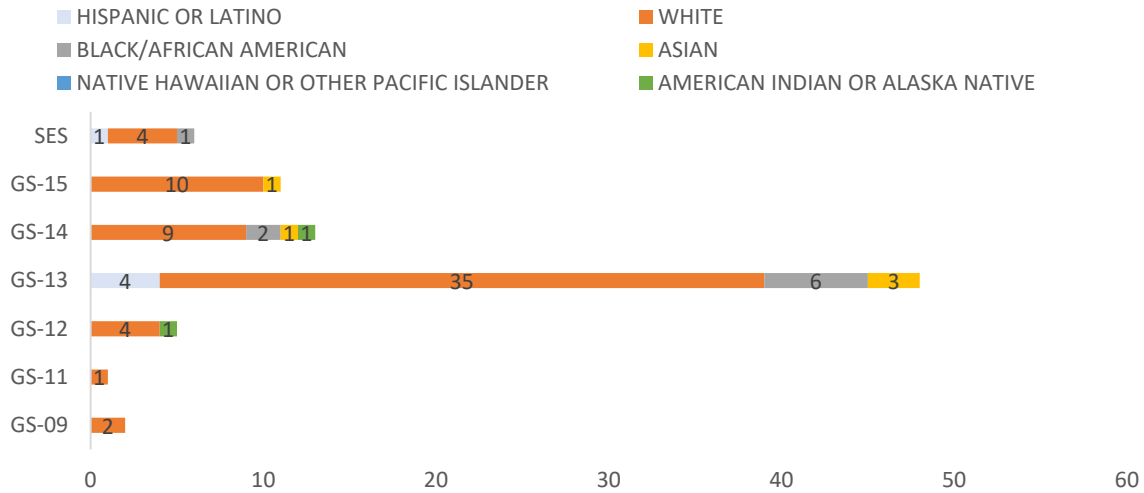


Figure 15- Diversity of Males within EDA by GS Level (Of Permanent Employees as of 7/2021)

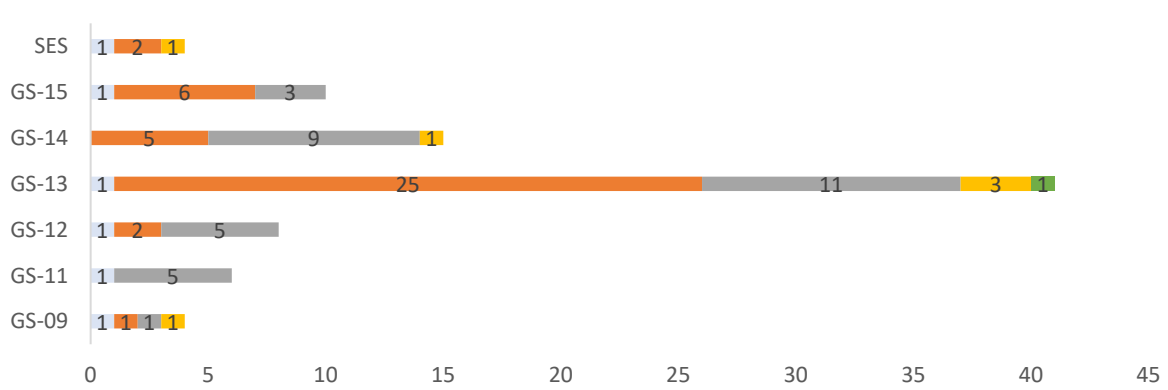


Figure 16- Diversity of Females within EDA by GS Level (Of Permanent Employees as of 7/2021)

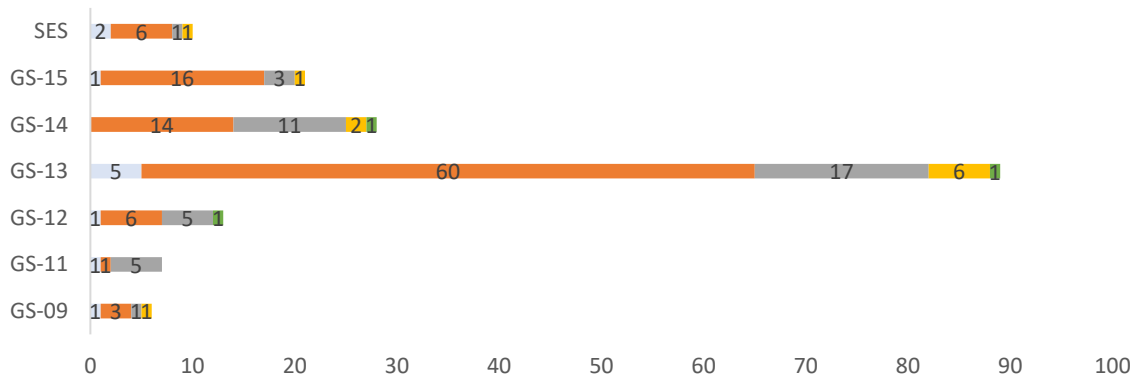


Figure 17- Diversity of Males and Females within EDA by GS Level (Permanent Employees as of 7/2021)

Persons With Disabilities - EDA has a total of 30 Individuals with Disabilities in the total workforce (*permanent and temporary*), which represents 10.31% of the total EDA workforce. This represents 91% of the EEOC's 12% goal. EDA has a total of 7 employees with Targeted Disabilities, representing 2.55% of the workforce, above the EEOC's 2% goal.

EDA has 20 employees who are Individuals with Disabilities in the *permanent workforce*, representing 11.56% of the total permanent EDA workforce, representing 96% of the EEOC's 12% goal. There are 6 permanent employees with Targeted Disabilities, which is 3.47% of the total EDA workforce, above the EEOC's 2% goal for Individuals with Targeted Disabilities.

Education: EDA's workforce is well-educated, with roughly 70% of EDA staff having attained the degree of bachelor's or higher in 2020. This is unsurprising given EDA's top-heavy grading structure, discussed in the profile's Hiring and Recruiting section below, whereby the majority of EDA's workforce is staffed at GS-13 or above (grades that are frequently filled by those with a master's degree or bachelor's degree and a significant amount of experience).

Recently, CARES hiring has led to a noticeable shift in EDA's education breakdown. 2020 saw a significant increase in the number of EDA staff with bachelor's and master's degrees, though their proportions within the workforce decreased slightly. In 2020, EDA experienced a dramatic increase in both the number and proportion of individuals who had not attained post-secondary education.

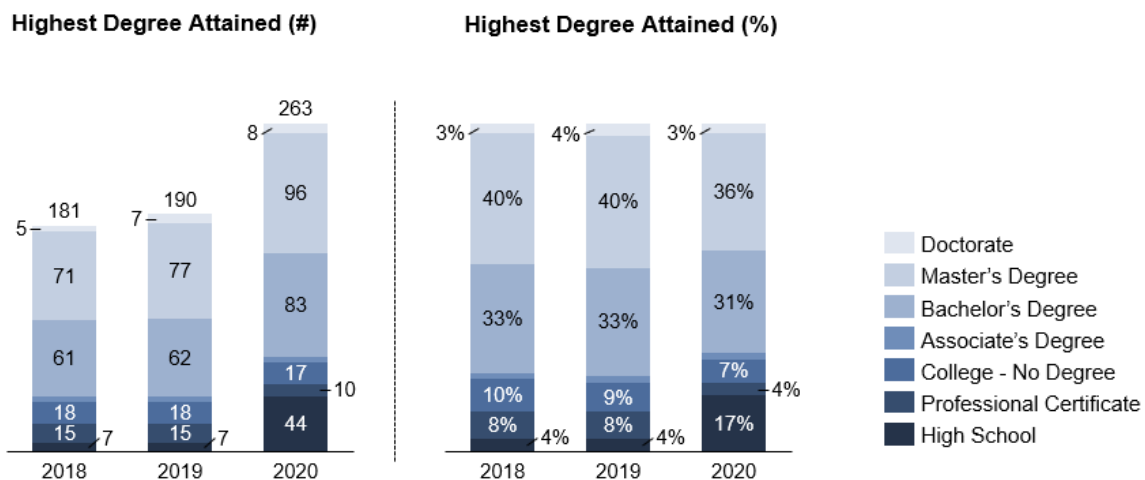


Figure 18 - EDA Workforce Education Breakdown (2018 - 2020)

Desired Workforce Composition

Key Driver 1: Competency Needs

Current State

As described in the Introduction, competencies refer to the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required of EDA's workforce to effectively execute the responsibilities that drive EDA's day-to-day mission execution. While EDA has used competencies in past employee hiring, no robust and documented competency model exists formally. Today, senior members of each regional office may convey the KSAs needed for their unique environment when working with OFMS headquarters staff to promote and advertise positions, but those KSAs are not a part of a formal document that can be used to train and develop employees or to assess staff roles.

Agreed-upon, documented competencies are foundational to many elements of workforce planning, for example:

- **Role Definition:** informing the expectations and requirements of employees in different roles
- **Hiring and Recruiting:** supporting consistent evaluation of potential hires for a given role
- **Training and Development:** helping to identify and prioritize training needs
- **Performance Management:** ensuring employees within a given role are consistently evaluated, and that their individual development plans are aligned against expectations for growth in their career path
- **Succession Planning and Supervisor Development:** helping to identify and prioritize KSAs that require proactive action to ensure they reside within the organization regardless of future attrition

The only formal EDA documentation that exists that comes close to describing competencies that the team was able to identify are the official position descriptions (PDs) for individual roles. When reviewing these PDs, the team found some content speaking to desired knowledge in Factor 1 of the classified position (e.g., "knowledge of NEPA and other environmental rules / regs" for EDRs, "knowledge of Economic Development Act of 1965" identified for EDSs, etc.) but very limited content speaking to skills and abilities, with the content identified being very generic in nature and often lacking a clear tie back to job responsibilities (e.g., "ability to develop networking relationships with proponents and/or stakeholders to ensure a constant inventory of promising investments for all programs" for EDRs). Skills noted for Area Directors include "Exceptional oral/written communication, tact, diplomacy and expert negotiation skills must be exercised in representing EDA to outside interests".

Given the current lack of documented competencies and the foundational nature of agreed-upon competencies, the team spent significant time developing a competency model for leadership consideration. Balancing impact with timeline, the team decided to focus this model on the KSAs needed to support the core grants management functions that constitute the execution of EDA's mission. Supporting functions (which mostly reside in HQ in roles within OFMS, OCC, etc.) were not considered as part of this analysis. The team used OPM's Grants Management competencies⁷ and information gleaned from EDA's PDs as a starting point for analysis. As mentioned above, EDA's PDs had limited KSA information. OPM's Grants Management competencies are also very generic (e.g., customer service, mathematical reasoning, reading, etc.). Therefore, the team dedicated time to facilitating multiple working sessions with various EDA stakeholders to collect more EDA-relevant input to develop a proposed

⁷ <https://www.chcoc.gov/content/competency-model-grants-management>

competency model that was more specific. This model is described in the next section as a Recommendation for Consideration.

Recommendations for Consideration

The first step the team took in developing the proposed competency list was to define the core job functions that constitute grants management at EDA, aligning on the below core and auxiliary functions:

EDA Grants Management Core Functions

- **Outreach:** Customer-facing community interactions performed to identify, design, and manage future grants
- **Processing (Pre- & Post-Approval):** Technical/logistical routing, analysis, and approval of application documentation submitted by prospective grantees
- **SME Review:** Expert review and approval required for all projects to ensure that they meet legal, engineering, and environmental requirements.
- **Evaluation:** Conceptual grant assessment performed during investment review committees and immediately thereafter for grant funding recommendations/decisions
- **Post-Award Grants Management:** Oversight performed post-award to ensure that grant timelines/funding requirements are being carried out properly by awardees

EDA Grants Management Auxiliary Functions

- **Administration:** The supporting duties performed on a day-to-day basis to support grant staff operations
- **Supervision:** The managerial oversight / review performed on a day-to-day basis to ensure that deadlines are met and that grants are processed smoothly
- **Integration:** The inter-agency collaboration performed by EDA with other federal agencies to increase potential leverage / funding impact for its prospective grantees

Using these eight functions as the framework, the team’s discussions and analysis led to the identification of roughly 40 individual competencies, categorized as either Functional (tied to a specific function and thus required only of those staff who perform the given function) or Foundational (applicable to all staff to varying degrees). In identifying competencies, the team also made sure to capture both Technical competencies, or “hard” skills that are specialized to EDA work, and Non-Technical competencies (typically called “soft” skills). See Table 4 for the full list of competencies that is being put forth by the team as a recommendation for consideration.

Table 4: Full List of Competencies

Competency Name	Competency Description	Relevant Function	Technical Type	Work Type
Ability to Navigate Ambiguity	Maintains focus and productivity in uncertain situations or without complete information.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Attention to Detail	Ensures information is complete and accurate; follows up with others to ensure that agreements and commitments have been fulfilled.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Budget Management	Participates in the budget planning and oversight process as necessary.	Administrative	Technical	Functional
Coaching Ability	Demonstrates capacity to provide detailed, process step-level assistance to applicants as they prepare their grant applications for submission.	Outreach	Non-technical	Functional

Critical Thinking / Listening	Demonstrates ability to understand a problem from multiple perspectives; analyzes facts to understand a problem or topic thoroughly.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Customer Support	Demonstrates a commitment to public service; serves and satisfies internal and external customers; holds self-accountable for quality outcomes.	Outreach, Post-Award Grants Management, Integration	Non-technical	Functional
Data Management and Analytics	Demonstrates awareness of data definitions, data sources, and programmatic data guidelines.	All	Technical	Foundational
Decision Making	Obtains information and identifies key issues and implications to make informed and objective decisions.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
EDA Systems Proficiency	Understands (and demonstrates the ability to operate) the foundational systems utilized by the EDA in its daily business.	All	Technical	Foundational
Grants Administration	Administers grants and cooperative agreements, applying knowledge of organizational needs and deadlines, as well as federal regulations.	Post-Award Grants Management	Technical	Functional
Human Resources	Assists in staffing, position management, training, timekeeping and payroll, and employee retention issues as directed and in accordance with the organization's human resource policies and procedures.	Administrative	Technical	Functional
Initiative	Identifies opportunities and issues, and proactively acts and follows through on work activities to capitalize or resolve them.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Interpersonal Relations	Relates well to individuals from varied backgrounds and in different situations; shows understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Knowledge of Federal / Departmental Procedures	Understands and applies knowledge of Federal and Departmental statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Legal, Engineering, Civil Rights, or Environmental Expertise	Maintains advanced level of legal / engineering / civil rights / environmental knowledge and its relevance to work performed by the organization.	SME Review	Technical	Functional
Negotiation	Works with others towards an agreement that may involve exchanging specific resources or resolving differences.	Supervision	Non-technical	Functional
Networking (Federal)	Demonstrates awareness of Federal stakeholders outside of EDA, tracking synergies that provide enhanced opportunities for EDA's programmatic delivery.	Integration	Non-technical	Functional
Office Administration	Applies knowledge of support principles, practices, policies and processes to ensure effective and efficient administrative operations.	Administrative	Technical	Functional
Planning & Prioritization	Plans and organizes work activities; manages several tasks at once. Assesses relative importance of activities and assignments; adjusts priorities when appropriate.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Portfolio Oversight	Maintains high-level knowledge of a grants portfolio in order to promote effective	Supervisor	Technical	Functional

	operations and ensure that office deadlines / quotas are met.			
Principles of Finance	Knowledge of the basic principles, practices, and methods of financial management to include requisitions, apportionments, allotments, investments, fiscal management, activity reporting, and fiscal year guidelines.	All	Technical	Foundational
Problem Solving	Identifies problems and uses logic, judgment, and data to evaluate alternatives and recommend solutions to achieve the desired organizational goal or outcome.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Project Management	Creates and maintains an environment that guides a project to its successful completion.	Processing, Post-Award Grants Management	Technical	Functional
Qualitative Analysis	Examines and evaluates descriptive, non-numeric data to manage and achieve results.	SME Review, Evaluation, Supervision	Technical	Functional
Quantitative Analysis	Examines and evaluates numeric data to manage and achieve results.	SME Review, Evaluation, Supervision	Technical	Functional
Relationship Building	Identifies and strengthens working relationships with external stakeholders, maintaining them in a way that is beneficial to both parties.	Outreach, Integration	Non-technical	Functional
Results Oriented	Identifies and meets with appropriate parties to develop an understanding of the project goals and desired outcomes. Focuses on desired results to achieve goals.	Outreach, Integration, Supervision	Non-technical	Functional
Risk Analysis (Financial)	Identifies and manages the risks of failing to detect a misstatement, caused by inadvertent error or fraud that is material to financial statements.	Processing, Post-Award Grants Management	Technical	Functional
Risk Management	Plans and implements measures that will avoid, overcome or compensate for elements of risk.	All	Technical	Foundational
Strategic Decision Making	Makes sound decisions that take into account objectives, risks, implications, and agency and governmental regulations.	Evaluation, Supervision	Technical	Functional
Teamwork / Collaboration	Works with and helps others to accomplish objectives.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Technical Compliance Review	Ensures grant applications / awards conform with all relevant federal & departmental requirements.	Processing	Technical	Functional
Technical Writing	Prepares written documentation to transfer technical information about concepts, situations, products, services, or results to audiences with varying levels of technical knowledge.	SME Review	Technical	Functional
Time Management	Uses time effectively and efficiently; concentrates efforts on most important priorities.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Travel Management	Assists travelers and travel planners in interpreting and applying travel regulations, policies and procedures.	Administrative	Technical	Functional
Understanding of Community Landscape / Needs	Demonstrates awareness of relevant community landscape and remains familiar with community economic development needs.	Outreach, Supervision	Technical	Functional

Understanding of Economic Development Strategies	Demonstrates awareness of applicable economic development strategies, leveraging them where possible to provide positive outcomes to EDA customers.	All	Technical	Foundational
Understanding of EDA's Grant Priorities / Needs	Maintains up-to-date technical knowledge of EDA's agency-level grant priorities.	Evaluation, Outreach, Supervision	Technical	Functional
Understanding of EDA's Grant Programs	Maintains familiarity with EDA's different grant programs and associated funding processes/requirements.	All	Technical	Foundational
Verbal / Written Communication	Delivers clear, effective communication to internal and external stakeholders and takes responsibility for understanding others.	All	Non-technical	Foundational
Vision	Builds and shares a compelling view of the direction, or sense of purpose of the organization, to engage and motivate others toward a common goal.	Supervision	Non-technical	Functional

Table 5 below calls out all of the functional competencies that have relevance to the Outreach function (i.e., does not include the foundational competencies that are relevant to all functions). This example helps demonstrate how a competency model can further elaborate on the KSAs needed for a certain job function to be executed well, especially when compared with the lack of EDA-specific content captured in the current PDs. For example, it is well known that EDA operates on the basic principle that sustainable economic development should be locally driven, which results in EDA working directly with communities and regions to help them build the capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs. However, the current EDR PD does not speak to this concept. Adopting “understanding of community landscape / needs” as a formally recognized competency that is critical to the Outreach function would ensure emphasis is placed on this skill through hiring, onboarding, training, and development efforts. This core competency can be understood and validated through competency assessments among the EDR population.

Table 5: Competencies Related to the Outreach Function

Competency Name	Competency Description	Relevant Function	Technical Type	Work Type
Coaching Ability	Demonstrates capacity to provide detailed, process step-level assistance to applicants as they prepare their grant applications for submission.	Outreach	Non-technical	Functional
Customer Support	Demonstrates a commitment to public service; serves and satisfies internal and external customers; holds self accountable for quality outcomes.	Outreach, Post-Award Grants Management, Integration	Non-technical	Functional
Interpersonal Relations	Relates well to individuals from varied backgrounds and in different situations; shows understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness.	Post-Award Grants Management, Integration, Outreach, Processing, Supervision,	Non-technical	Functional
Relationship Building	Identifies and strengthens working relationships with external stakeholders, maintaining them in a way that is beneficial to both parties.	Outreach, Integration	Non-technical	Functional

Results Oriented	Identifies and meets with appropriate parties to develop an understanding of the project goals and desired outcomes. Focuses on desired results to achieve goals.	Outreach, Integration, Supervision	Non-technical	Functional
Understanding of Community Landscape / Needs	Demonstrates awareness of relevant community landscape and remains familiar with community economic development needs.	Outreach, Supervision	Technical	Functional
Understanding of EDA's Grant Priorities / Needs	Maintains up-to-date technical knowledge of EDA's agency-level grant priorities.	Evaluation, Outreach, Supervision	Technical	Functional

To implement the proposed competency model, several actions would need to be taken:

- Collect input on the proposed competencies from the entire EDA leadership team, to ensure they accurately and comprehensively represent the KSAs needed to support the eight grants management functions
- Identify an organization and/or individual to be responsible for maintaining the competency model in an easily accessible location—the vacant Chief Talent Resources Officer within OFMS would be a natural candidate
- Having an agreed-upon competency list that simply exists is not sufficient to drive impact. The organization and/or individual responsible for maintaining the competency model should also take action to implement it (ideas for operationalizing the competencies are captured in the next section as Additional Overarching Considerations)

Additional Overarching Considerations

To best operationalize the competencies, an additional competency assessment is needed to pair individual competencies with required proficiency levels—i.e., the skill level required within each competency for staff members to perform their respective functions at the desired efficacy level. Required proficiency levels add another dimension to the competency model, defining not only what KSAs are required of staff, but what level of performance is desired within individual KSAs. This would be mapped to roles and grade levels—e.g., a more senior EDS should be expected to be more proficient at certain competencies than a more junior EDS, and documenting these expectations is critical to many workforce plan components (evaluating potential hires, evaluating employee performance).

As a reference, OPM defines a five-level proficiency scale as shown in Table 6 below, which they use to specify expected proficiency level at different grade levels. For example, within OPM's grants management competency model, a GS-7 is only expected to demonstrate a Level 2/Basic rating for "Grants Management Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines" whereas GS-9 through GS-12 is expected to be at Level 3/Intermediate and GS-13 and above is expected to be at Level 4/Advanced.

Table 6: The OPM competency proficiency scale

Level/Rating	Definition
Expert (5)	Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations. Serves as a key resource and advises others.
Advanced (4)	Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations. Generally requires little or no guidance.
Intermediate (3)	Applies the competency in difficult situations. Requires occasional guidance.
Basic (2)	Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations. Requires frequent guidance.
Awareness (1)	Applies the competency in the simplest situations. Requires close and extensive guidance.
Not Required (0)	No proficiency or Competency is not required for position.

OPM's grants management competency model lays out the evolution of expectations across grade-levels, which helps demonstrate how important a given competency is:

- Only one competency (integrity/honesty) has a high proficiency level no matter what grade level (the highest proficiency level OPM uses in their model is a 4), signifying this is a must-have competency no matter what
- On the other end of the spectrum, some competencies do not get to a proficiency level of 4 until the GS-13, 14, or 15 levels, signifying that they are more advanced in nature (e.g., conflict management, influencing/negotiating, etc.)
- Most of the competencies reach a proficiency level of 4 at the GS-11 or GS-12 levels, signifying that these represent the "bread and butter" of what is expected by OPM of grants management roles (e.g., decision-making, problem solving, etc.)

Since the OPM model is very generic, it is difficult to map their competency-by-competency proficiency levels to the proposed EDA grants management competency model. Additional EDA stakeholder input is needed to expand on the proposed competency model and add in required proficiency levels, which was not able to be performed within the available time for developing this Workforce Plan.

Once EDA determines required proficiency levels across competencies, another action EDA could take to further operationalize the proposed competency model is to assess the current staff proficiency exhibited by EDA staff members in performing their respective functions, which will allow for identification of proficiency gaps when comparing to required proficiency levels. This analysis would be useful for helping staff members develop individual development plans to prioritize areas of growth and helping to prioritize training and development plans to focus on the biggest proficiency gaps at the agency, among other uses.

Evaluating current staff proficiency can be tricky given the personal nature of the analysis. Individuals may be asked to provide proficiency levels for themselves, or supervisors may validate or provide levels for each of their reports, or supervisors may provide "average" proficiency levels for their position types as a whole, by Title/Job Series and Grade. For example, supervisors could provide a single proficiency level for all GS-13 Economic Development Representatives (EDR) under their supervision.

Once the assessment data has been collected, EDA should assess gaps by comparing the aggregate results of current staff proficiency against required proficiency levels. Through this comparison, EDA would be able to identify critical competency gaps and skill gaps. This representation of the analysis could include:

1. Evaluating the importance of each competency and comparing to proficiency levels;
2. Analyzing competencies with high importance but lower proficiency;
3. Sorting results by average importance, average proficiency, and average gaps;
4. Comparing current proficiency levels to target proficiency levels;
5. Determining impact of workforce attrition over the planning horizon to identify future gaps;
6. Determining what gaps exist between the current workforce and projected needs; and
7. Developing data visualizations for stakeholder understanding and decision making.

Key Driver 2: Role Definition

Current State

In addition to ensuring clarity and alignment on desired competencies across the organization, a mutual understanding of the responsibilities of specific job roles is necessary to support sustainable workforce planning. For example, as workload fluctuates and attrition (via retirement or otherwise) occurs, strategies to right-size the workforce in response can be greatly hindered if roles are not clearly defined (e.g., hiring for a particular role and its associated competencies, but later realizing that a different set of competencies associated with a different role was better suited to the need). In addition to setting common boundaries and expectations, role definition can also help EDA achieve a prepared, engaged, and right-sized workforce through:

- Employee development toward mission requirements, performance, and career goals,
- Optimization of positions for regions, roles, and grades, and
- Predictive workforce planning based on mission requirements and anticipated workload.

The team's role definition analysis is covered in this section, and focused specifically on the following six positions and the Regional Environmental Officer function⁸:

1. Economic Development Representative (EDR): GS-13
2. Economic Development Specialist (EDS): GS-9/11/12
3. Area Director (AD): GS-14/15
4. Administrative Director: GS-14
5. Civil Engineer: GS-13
6. Program Analyst: 9/11/12/13
7. Regional Environmental Officer (REO)

An immediate finding by the team was that EDA's formal position descriptions for key regional office titles—those that are staffed with relative consistency across regional offices—are frequently out of sync with the daily activities of the individuals who staff those positions. Variation in roles and responsibilities between individuals with the same title is common across, and sometimes within, regional offices.

Among the regional offices, role definitions/responsibilities for key grants management staff (those that perform outreach, processing, SME review, evaluation, and post-award grants management functions) are becoming increasingly fragmented, due to rising workload and regional management decisions on how best to meet their mission with the resources available. Table 7 shows how specific roles align to grants management functions in the current environment at an aggregate level, clearly indicating that alignment is not true for every region, or consistent across them. The numbers in the table count the number of regional offices currently aligning the role to the post-award grants management process functions. Five regional offices are included in the analysis⁹.

⁸ These seven items were the focus of the team's role definition analysis due to the fact that they comprise the vast majority of EDA's collective regional office workforce and are responsible for driving EDA's grants award and management capabilities.

⁹ Based on workload data inputs received from five of six regional offices (not including PRO due to data availability constraints). For more information on these inputs and associated methodology, see this document's "Workload Demand" section.

Table 7: Aligning roles and RO count to grants management functions in current environment based on regional workload data for each region¹⁰

Outreach	Processing	SME Review	Evaluation	Post-Award Grants Management
<i>AD (5 ROs)</i>	<i>AD (4)</i>	<i>AD (3)</i>	<i>AD (5)</i>	<i>AD (5)</i>
<i>Admin (3)</i>	<i>Admin (4)</i>	<i>Admin (3)</i>	<i>Admin (5)</i>	<i>Admin (5)</i>
<i>Analyst (3)</i>	<i>Analyst (5)</i>	<i>Analyst (3)</i>	<i>Analyst (3)</i>	<i>Analyst (5)</i>
<i>CE (5)</i>	<i>CE (3)</i>	<i>CE (5)</i>	<i>CE (4)</i>	<i>CE (5)</i>
<i>EDR (5)</i>	<i>EDR (3)</i>	<i>EDR (1)</i>	<i>EDR (4)</i>	<i>EDR (2)</i>
<i>EDS (4)</i>	<i>EDS (5)</i>	<i>EDS (1)</i>	<i>EDS (4)</i>	<i>EDS (4)</i>
<i>REO (4)</i>	<i>REO (2)</i>	<i>REO (4)</i>	<i>REO (3)</i>	<i>REO (4)</i>

Role definition as it applies to the grants management process is not consistent across regions or functions. Some variation is to be expected in a decentralized organization such as EDA and is temporarily acceptable in situations where workload demand exceeds supply and employee skills and/or time can be reallocated to maintain productivity. However, systemic role inconsistency undermines the capability of a central planning process for recruitment, training, performance management, and workload distribution strategies. Further, when temporary work becomes a regular and recurring part of a job, the position should be reevaluated for accuracy and confirmation of the appropriate occupational series and/or grade level. The most significant overlaps of work are between EDR and EDS, EDS and Program/Management Analysts, Area Directors and Administrative Directors, and Civil Engineers and other positions conducting the REO function.

Position Overlap Findings:

- **EDR and EDS:** EDR positions often experience functional overlap with EDS positions in processing applications. While EDRs are responsible for outreach activities, EDRs often perform technical reviews for completeness, address deficiencies to complete applications, and draft and send letters to applicants as part of the processing function. EDRs often participate in administrative IRC (Investment Review Committee) preparation. Technical reviews of and addressing deficiencies in applications, however, are identified as Major Duties in the EDS PD and knowledge requirements. Preparing for IRCs (Investment Review Committee) from an administrative perspective such as coordination and organization and preparing applicant letters are administrative tasks also more appropriately residing with the EDS position.
- **Program/Management Analysts (non-RLF, non-EDI) and EDS:** Some analysts are performing non-construction grant process steps more appropriately aligned with the EDS role. Analysts are intended to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and operations or the productivity and efficiency of management, or both. The post-award and close-out functions are not consistent with the analyst PD and fall within the realm of the EDS.

¹⁰ Based on workload data inputs received from five of six regional offices (not including PRO due to data availability constraints). For more information on these inputs and associated methodology, see this document's "Workload Demand" section.

- **Area Directors and Administrative Directors:** The role of Administrative Directors (GS-14) is largely administrative in nature. They are responsible for advising and serving as the technical authority to the Regional Director and Area Directors on all regional administrative policies, practices, procedures, and issues as well as providing technical oversight of budget formulation, presentation, and execution for the designated region. Despite this, Administrative Directors are frequently involved in the oversight of non-construction grant portfolios across regional offices, assuming grant management responsibilities that are typically reserved for Area Directors, who, at the GS-15 grade level, are expected to perform the complex job of grant portfolio oversight.

Specifically, three Factors in the two roles' position descriptions (Program Scope and Effect, Supervisory and Managerial Authority, and Other Conditions Scope and Effect), carry higher point values for Area Directors, underscoring their distinction for their grading. Area Directors require deep knowledge in policy, programs and procedures as stated in their position description language: *"Expert knowledge of the Economic Development Act of 1965, specifically Title I and Title IX construction projects; Title DC revolving loan fund projects and/or Title III and Title IX capacity building projects involving university center activities is required". Conversely, the Administrative Director position description focuses on administrative operations as noted in the position description: "The incumbent must also have the ability to design and conduct substantive management studies that are often characterized by significant breadth and importance requiring a mastery of advanced management and organizational principles and practices to identify and propose solutions to administrative problems"*.

Methods for dividing these non-construction grant programs between Area Directors, who are otherwise responsible for the oversight of all RO grant programs, and Administrative Directors are not consistent across regional offices, if even appropriate per the position descriptions.

- **Civil Engineers and REOs:** In certain regions, the Civil Engineer position is responsible for performing the duties of the Regional Environmental Officer function (elsewhere performed by the Environmental Protection Specialist) in addition to providing professional engineering expertise. This variability exposes EDA to potential risk, as it introduces additional room for error in the environmental compliance process, and mistakes made during a grant application's environmental processing could result in non-compliance with federal, tribal, state, or local laws and open EDA to potential legal ramifications.

In the tables below, each role/grade level is described at a high level starting with the official position description of record (given that the position descriptions are the official classified statements of the positions' major duties, responsibilities, and supervisory relationships, they have been used as the foundation for these baseline role description interpretations). The tables below also capture the team's key findings in regard to how the positions are actually operating on a day-to-day basis, informed primarily by IPT inputs and BPR findings.¹¹

Area Director (AD)

Role: Area Director	GS: 14/15
Description	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists the Regional Director (SES) with managerial responsibilities related to the oversight, planning and integration of EDA regional programmatic activities with that of EDA HQ. 	

¹¹ In-depth analyses of each role definition can be found in this document's Appendix A.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities involve the solicitation, development, analysis, monitoring, and quality assurance of investments that comport with EDA funding priorities and investment strategies and related grants management and administrative duties. Assists the RD in the direction and oversight of economic development construction project management activities that are complex and/or unique constructions operations meeting stringent EDA eligibility requirements.
<p>Area Director Key Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally performs grant application logistical intake duties. The AD may assign intake duties, but the EDS, and sometimes EDA roles, are better aligned to perform the duties. Occasionally adds projects to IRC agenda if determined by management. The AD may determine approval criteria and approve applications for IRC, but the EDS role is better aligned to draft the IRC agenda based on PD criteria. Occasionally performs preparation of final award package. To maximize efficiency, the AD should receive the final award package prepared by the EDS. Occasionally performs RO request Sent to Washington (STW). To maximize efficiency, the EDS should perform this duty. Unknown criteria for staffing more than one AD per region, leading to notable variations in organizational design (and, potentially, efficiency) across regional offices. There are areas that both the AD and Admin Director are involved in but from a different perspective. The AD from a strategy and operational oversight perspective (i.e., developing a comprehensive investment strategy for their geographic sub-region; directs staff in all post approval investment activities) and the Admin Director from a planning process (i.e., coordinates the regional offices' administrative budgeting process; incumbent oversees the regional office's post-approval management process for EDA investments in non-construction projects). This overlap – particularly as it surrounds non-construction grants oversight—can lead to confusion as to who has oversight responsibility for certain parts of the grants process. An instance of an inconsistent level/point assignment for the same factor (Factor 6 – “Other Conditions”) across the GS-14 <i>and</i> GS-15 position descriptions.¹² These discrepancies should be discussed with HR.

Administrative Director

Role: Administrative Director	GS: 14
<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard position description across all regions Functions as the top administrative advisor and technical authority to the Regional Director (SES) and Area Directors Covers all regional administrative policies, practices, procedures, and issues 	

¹² PD Factor 6 of the GS-14 and GS-15 Area Director PDs – the factor associated with incumbent work requirements related to “Other Conditions” – is assigned a higher point value on the GS-14 PD than the GS-15 PD (i.e., 1325 points on the GS-14 PD vs. 1225 points on the GS-15 PD). Note that each PD utilizes the same verbiage for Factor 6: “the incumbent supervises subordinates that require exceptional coordination and integration of a number of very important and complex segments of professional, technical, and managerial initiatives...” These considerations suggest that there is likely an error in Factor 6 of the current GS-14 Position Description, which one would generally expect to have a lower point value than Factor 6 of the GS-15 Position Description (commensurate with grading differences) given these circumstances.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides technical oversight of budget formulation, presentation, and execution for the designated region.
<p>Administrative Director Key Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that the Administrative Director is assigned responsibility for anything that needs to get done but doesn't necessarily have an identified owner, or that others are too busy to do. This can lead to confusion regarding the Administrative Director's oversight responsibilities and can also lead to feelings of low morale (for both the Administrative Director and his/her direct reports, who must be able to quickly adjust their workloads to accommodate/complete tasks that others are unable to complete). Frequently involved in the oversight of non-construction grant portfolios across regional offices, leading to internal/external feelings of confusion around what grant programs Administrative Directors are responsible for overseeing, as well as feelings amongst Administrative Directors that they are being asked to perform Area Director-level work without receiving Area Director-level pay. These feelings can be particularly potent in regional offices that leverage a single Area Director model because Administrative Directors are sometimes seen as being the only other supervisor available to 'pick up the slack' created when there is only a single Area Director on staff. The Administrative Director position does not specify that knowledge of the following statutes are required: Economic Development Act of 1965, specifically Title 1 and Title IX construction projects, Title IX revolving loan fund projects and/or Title III and Title IX capacity building projects involving university center activities. This may undermine the effectiveness of their involvement in oversight of non-construction grant portfolios.

Economic Development Representative (EDR)

Role: EDR	GS: 13
<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First POC on development activity related to all EDA programs, advises applicants and grantees on opportunities and requirements, establishes planning coordinating activities and implementation of projects in his/her area. Represents agency authoritatively to key government and business officials and organizations, plans and manages delivery of major, high priority products and services central to agency objective relative to economic development business/industry issues/policies. 	
<p>EDR Key Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often performs duties better aligned to EDS, including Technical Review (following application submittal), Address deficiencies to complete application, administrative preparation for IRC, Draft and send letter to applicant. This places a relatively large administrative/logistical burden on EDRs that limits their ability to perform the outreach function. Related to the previous bullet, at least one office has adopted, and feels strongly about, a streamlined, single-owner outreach/processing model whereby EDRs own the entire pre-award grant development process (from application ideation through its presentation at IRC). This shifts a bulk of workload that is otherwise handled by EDSs to EDRs, minimizing the need for EDSs in offices that follow this model while potentially increasing the need for EDRs in those regional offices. These regional offices shared that this single-ownership model ensures higher-quality applications and limits the amount of friction associated with transitioning application 	

ownership from the EDR to the EDS role. This modified EDR/EDS model appears to conflict with the current EDR/EDS position descriptions as they are written.

- Under CARES hiring (short term) there is an EDR GS-12 position that is junior to the GS-13 which - functioning in somewhat of a deputy capacity to permanent GS-13 EDRs - has been received well by staff across regional offices.
- EDR's frequently (but do not always) perform an *informal, non-standardized* process step prior to grant applicants submitting their applications whereby the EDR performs a final review of the application packet to minimize errors that would need to be correct post-submittal. This informal process step, when performed, helps streamline the grant application process.¹³

Economic Development Specialist (EDS)

Role: EDS	GS: 9/11/12 (<i>plus several legacy 13s</i>)
<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions as specialist on all matters related to the development of grant proposals and the subsequent award of grants for Public Works, Planning, Technical Assistance, and Economic Adjustment Programs, as directed. 	
<p>General EDS Key Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDSs are classified in the GS-1101 job series. At their core, EDS's work reflects much of what is described (in terms of knowledge and duties) in the 2010, Position Classification Flysheet for Grants Management Series, GS-1109. • The GS-13 EDS position is legacy position that in certain regions, such as PRO, functions in a similar manner to the GS-13 EDR (i.e., in terms of outreach, etc.).¹⁴ It will not be backfilled once vacated, likely due to cost and perceived overlap with the EDR position. It is being backfilled by GS-9/11/12 EDS ladder positions. This recent restructuring has largely eliminated GS-13 promotion potential for EDSs in current state EDA, but some Regional Directors have started to work around this issue by diagonally promoting EDS GS-12s to Analyst GS-13s. See this document's GS-13 EDS recommendation (and the associated footnote) for more information. • There is a clear connection between the GS-9 and GS-12 EDS positions in terms of duties and assignments, however the GS-11 position description contains outreach activities that are not addressed anywhere else within the EDS PD/knowledge requirements (and are in fact directly addressed in the EDR PD/knowledge requirements).¹⁵ • Related to the previous bullet, the GS-11 PD states that the incumbent advises the Team Leader and Area Director on all environmental impact matters that would affect the consideration of a proposed project. This duty also appears in the GS-13 Environmental Protection Specialist PD. 	

¹³ Note that applicants are not required to interface with EDRs prior to submitting their grant applications to EDA for review, however, when they do (and when this informal process step is performed by EDRs), applications are generally submitted in a much higher quality than when applicants choose to not interface with EDRs.

¹⁴ Currently, 9 GS-13 EDSs are staffed across four regional offices (Austin, Chicago, Denver, and Philadelphia).

¹⁵ Note that this abnormal GS-11 position description does *not* appear to reflect the day-to-day jobs of most of EDAs regional office GS-11s (who generally appear to perform work in line with other EDSs on the GS-9/11/12 career ladder (albeit at a commensurate complexity). In other words, this is to say that the current abnormal GS-11 position description may simply be the result of a human resources error that could be corrected by headquarters. EDA would need to perform more analysis to determine the true extent of this abnormality's current-state impact.

- The anomalous nature of the GS-11 EDS position creates a dissonant EDS career ladder from GS-9 to GS-11 to GS-12, leading to the possibility of confusion career path confusion for those who are hired into the new EDS paradigm.

Management/Program Analyst

Role: Management/Program Analyst (non-RLF, non-EDI)	GS: 13/12/11/9
Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This position analyzes and advises management on the evaluation of the effectiveness of programs and operations or the productivity and efficiency of management, or both. 	
Analyst Key Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Management/Program Analyst position descriptions are notably vague, leading to the opportunity for regional offices to leverage these positions in an ad hoc manner to fill gaps in office workload. This stopgap staffing solution (i.e., the mentality that Analysts can be used as generalist utility players) may make it more challenging for EDA executive leadership to make structured strategic staffing decisions on a regional office-wide basis, because regional office stakeholders may be able to use Analysts to circumvent suggested changes with which they disagree. • Analysts perform post-award and close-out non-construction grant process steps in at least one regional office, responsibilities that should reside with the EDS. This overlap, when it occurs, can lead to confusion/blurred responsibility boundaries between the Analyst and EDS positions. • The GS-9 level position does not require the knowledge of qualitative and quantitative techniques or laws, regulations, and policies that the other grade levels require. It performs under greater supervision. Guidelines are more specific at the lower grade levels and work is less complex. The in-practice impact of this GS-9 position description variation is likely not very large for regional offices, because few GS-9 Analysts are staffed across regional offices. However, it does create the potential for position description misalignment with workload responsibilities as practiced. • The GS-9 PD indicates career ladder to GS-13, however the GS-11 and GS-12 indicate they are at the target position suggesting misalignment of career ladder. 	

Civil Engineer

Role: Civil Engineer	GS: 13
Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This position is responsible for the development and monitoring of construction grants. Provides professional engineering review and project management services for all EDA projects in the geographic area to which assigned. 	
Civil Engineer Key Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undetermined involvement in the GPRA reporting process, leading to workload variation between Civil Engineers who are asked to encumber GPRA reporting responsibilities and those who are not. 	

Regional Environmental Officer (REO)

Function: REO	GS: Various, depending on owner ¹⁶
Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs the required environmental processing of grant applications in order to certify that they are in compliance with relevant federal, tribal, state, and local environmental regulations. 	
REO Key Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The REO function is only currently performed by Environmental Protection Specialists (ATRO, CRO, DRO, SRO); Civil Engineers (AURO, PRO); and Environmental Contractors (SRO), although it could theoretically (though inadvisably) be encumbered by other titles in the future. Understanding is that the duties that comprise the Environmental Protection Specialist (EPS) PD are the REO functions; and therefore, EPSs are performing the REO function 100% of their time. In regions that don't have a dedicated EPS, the REO function duties are being assigned to other positions/occupational series that have other requirements and duties assigned to them, creating legal and process-related risk to EDA in those respective regional offices and over-encumbering staff who are forced to take on the function in addition to their regular work (and who might not even have the requisite background to perform environmental subject matter review in the first place).¹⁷ 	

Desired State

To restate the role definition challenge, EDA's key roles across regional offices vary in terms of their day-to-day responsibilities and alignment to their position descriptions. This raises implications both for internal management of positions as well as external perceptions from Congress, DOC, and others. Given the centrality of role definition in the workforce planning process, the desired state is to establish a common understanding of work responsibilities with clear boundaries. The desired state allows HR to prepare for a surge or replacement in staffing by knowing the functions, skills, and staffing levels that need to be addressed. Table 8 aligns the evaluated roles to the grants management functions in a future state, based on the role definition analysis of position descriptions, classification standards, IPT inputs, survey results, BPR findings, and workload demand data.

Table 8. Aligning roles to grants management functions in future environment based on role definition¹⁸

Outreach	Processing	SME Review	Evaluation	Post-Award Grants Management
<i>Current State</i>	<i>Current State</i>	<i>Current State</i>	<i>Current State</i>	<i>Current State</i>

¹⁶ As mentioned in the "REO Key Findings" section of this table, the REO function is currently performed by Civil Engineers or Environmental Protection Specialists. Both of these positions are currently staffed by EDA at the GS-13 level. In instances where the REO function is encumbered by a contractor (SRO), the function is not performed by an individual on the GS pay-scale.

¹⁷ See associated bullet in "Position Overlap Findings," above, and the associated REO recommendation, below, for more information.

¹⁸ Based on workload data inputs received from five of six regional offices (not including PRO). For more information on these inputs and associated methodology, see this document's "Workload Demand" section.

<i>Roles involved</i>	<i>Roles involved</i>	<i>Roles involved</i>	<i>Roles involved</i>	<i>Roles involved</i>
AD (5) Admin (3) Analyst (3) CE (5) EDR (5) EDS (4) REO (4)	AD (4) Admin (4) Analyst (5) CE (3) EDR (3) EDS (5) REO (2)	AD (3) Admin (3) Analyst (3) CE (5) EDR (1) EDS (1) REO (4)	AD (5) Admin (5) Analyst (3) CE (4) EDR (4) EDS (4) REO (3)	AD (5) Admin (5) Analyst (5) CE (5) EDR (2) EDS (4) REO (4)
<i>Future State Roles involved</i>	<i>Future State Roles involved</i>	<i>Future State Roles involved</i>	<i>Future State Roles involved</i>	<i>Future State Roles involved</i>
AD EDR	AD CE EDR EDS REO	AD CE EDS	AD Admin CE EDR EDS	AD CE EDS

The proposed recommendations affecting the way some of the roles are currently operating, including rationale, benefits, and risks, are described in the tables below. At the same time, the team recognizes that this does not lessen regional management's ability and responsibility to assign and organize work as it deems appropriate and necessary to accomplish the mission efficiently and economically. In other words, there may be rationale for some regional nuances due to economic and geographical differences. Further, it is not the intent that the various roles operate in isolation but that they coordinate, communicate, and collaborate with each other as needed to ensure the greatest outcomes in meeting mission requirements.

Area Director (AD)

Role: Area Director	GS: 14/15
Recommendation 1: <i>Description:</i> Clarify responsibilities in line with the position description through clear performance standards, communication, and accountability. ADs would <i>no longer</i> be responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (9) Intake of grant applications, which should be done by EDS; AD should retain responsibility to assign grant applications¹⁹ • (13) Add project to IRC agenda - AD should retain responsibility to determine criteria for project to be added to agenda and either approve or delegate approval to identified staff member who owns the tactical preparation of IRC agenda • (22) Prepare final award package - To be performed by EDS, and routed through AD for RD approval and signoff on 450 • (23) RO request STW (Sent to Washington) (HQ) - EDS will perform this step <i>Rationale:</i> To optimize efficiencies by assigning steps (or parts of steps) in the process to the appropriate position commensurate with the duties in their position description. This will allow the AD more time to focus their attention on the higher-level functions of assisting the Regional Director	

¹⁹ Note that the italicized numbers in these tables reference the EDA grant process step numbering convention that was established during EDA's 2020 Business Process Review. A process step reference guide can be found in this section's associated Appendix A. In-depth process flow diagrams can be found in EDA's BPR, completed in April 2020.

with managerial responsibilities related to the oversight, planning and integration of EDA regional programmatic activities with that of EDA HQ (rather than spending as much time on the logistical processing associated with grants management (e.g., uploading files, creating templates, etc.)).

Benefits:

- Promotes clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, to include primary areas of focus
- Enables better staff oversight
- Optimizes efficiencies (by removing redundancies and gaps, if any; ensuring collaboration where needed; and eliminating distractions of work that can be handled by subordinate staff).

Considerations: The focus of work may be a change from some of the ancillary work that some of the Area Directors have taken on and, in some cases, may prefer out of habit. Ancillary work would likely have to be accounted for by another role, such as EDS, of which bandwidth may not be available.

Recommendation 2:

Description: Ensure there is a clear understanding of what factors support the number of area directors staffed in each region

Rationale: Unknown criteria for more than one AD per region.²⁰

Benefits:

- Clarifying and communicating the factors that support the number of ADs in each region will demonstrate objectivity, transparency, and ensure a mutual understanding.²¹
- It will also help align regional office organizational design structures and help limit confusion related to Area Director / Admin Director oversight responsibility overlap, specifically with regard to non-construction grants. (E.g., Clear cutoffs with regard to when regional offices should staff another Area Director will help minimize the possibility that a Regional Director feels like they can redistribute workload from an overloaded Area Director to the Administrative Director in order to retain their office's one Area Director model.)

Considerations: Standards dictating the appropriate number of ADs may reveal offices with two only need one or vice-a-versa. EDA may also find that, under current the workloads associated with CARES and ARP Act funding, several regional offices might need three Area Directors.²²

²⁰ One factor behind the current one vs. two Area Director across regional offices split discrepancy is history. At a certain point in the past, regional offices were asked to reduce the number of Area Directors they had on staff from two to one in an effort to save costs. The team believes that that pressure no longer exists today; however, some regional offices (e.g., ATRO) have shaped their processes to fit the one Area Director model and now actually prefer it.

²¹ Potential benefits of the two-Area Director model include the ability for regional offices to more easily split grants workload along geographic, programmatic, or even process-oriented lines (while limiting the need for any potential ad hoc Administrative Director grants oversight involvement). A potential benefit of the one Area Director model is that it promotes grants process streamlining by reducing confusion regarding oversight responsibility.

²² EDA will need to determine how the newly created Supervisory Program Manager role (a CARES/ARP term role that is outside the scope of this initiative's targeted role definition reviews but that nevertheless serves as a sort of deputy EDR in some instances) fits into this question of proper Area Director organizational design (and whether/where SPM's can be leveraged well enough to relieve pressure for a greater number of Area Directors in certain regional offices).

Administrative Director

Role: Administrative Director	GS: 14
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Clarify responsibilities in line with the position description through clear performance standards, communication, and accountability. The following process steps, which at least one region's Administrative Director is performing for non-construction grants, do not seem to fall within the purview of the classified Administrative Director position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (29) Post-award manager sends notification to grantee with invitation to kick-off • (30) Kick-off call • (32) Progress Reports, • (33) Financial Reports, • (33.1) Create and sign payment memo, • (36) Run final closeout reports. <p><i>Rationale:</i> The identified process steps are project-specific and not focused on the administration of the region in terms of policies, practices, procedures, issues, or technical oversight of budget formulation, presentation, and execution. As such, they are more appropriately aligned with the work of the Supervisory Program Managers (within the context of non-construction grants). Reassigning these tasks to Supervisory Program Managers allows the Administrative Director to focus on the highest priority duties that have the greatest impact on regional efficiency and productivity.</p> <p><i>Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, to include primary areas of focus • Allows Administrative Directors to spend more time properly overseeing their staff • Ensures office structure supports the admin functions of the region, optimize efficiencies <p><i>Considerations:</i> The focus of work may be a change from some of the ancillary work that some of the Administrative Directors have taken on and, in some cases, may actively prefer due to their interest in grants management as well as the variety it provides them with in their day-to-day work. Ancillary work would likely have to be accounted for by another role, such as Supervisory Program Manager, which can be assessed as a permanent position, handling RLFs and non-construction grants along with other duties currently under their purview.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Assess Administrative Directors workload, post non-construction grants. This will validate the need to retitle or reclassify the position if future work volumes do not warrant currently grading.</p>	
<p>Additional Suggestion 1²³:</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Create a separate "Team Lead" role to handle the non-construction grant workload that is currently being owned by some Administrative Directors across regions.</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i> This would place non-construction grant oversight workload staff that have the proper skillset to manage it. The "Team Lead" role could report to the Regional Director and oversee a team of EDS's who are dedicated to processing non-construction grants. This role could be particularly valuable should EDA's workload continue to spike in the wake of ARP Act funding.</p> <p><i>Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properly align skillsets to workload • Allows Administrative Directors to focus on administrative operations • Promotes career pathing opportunities 	

²³ Note that "Additional Suggestions" are items that the team feels like EDA could benefit from exploring through future discussions but that which the team does not feel like rise to the level of urgency associated with other recommendations (and did not receive the same level of team discussion as the other recommendations).

Role: EDR	GS: 13
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p><i>Description:</i> EDRs would no longer be responsible for the following process steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (11) Technical review (completeness) (See recommendation 2 below), • (12) Address deficiencies to complete application (See recommendation 2 below), • (14) Prepare for IRC from an administrative perspective. However, EDRs would still participate in/be responsible for project presentation at the IRC, • (18) Draft and send letter to applicant. <p><i>Rationale:</i> (11) and (12) are identified as Major Duties in the EDS PD and knowledge requirements. (14) If this refers to preparing applications for IRC and (18) if this refers to communicating status of grant with applicant, these appear to be administrative (processing, tracking, etc.) work that more appropriately resides with the EDS position.</p> <p><i>Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes understanding of roles and responsibilities, to include primary areas of focus • Minimizes EDR/EDS process responsibility overlap, and associated confusion, that currently exists across several regional offices <p><i>Considerations:</i> Under this recommendation, the ownership responsibility for the referenced process steps passes fully to the EDS. A key point of consideration under those circumstances would be to precisely determine at which point the application is handed between EDRs and EDSs (at a level which is likely more granular than the determined process step numbers allow for). Any confusion about this handoff point risks confusing both the EDR and EDS and increases the likelihood that required grant processing items will ‘fall through the cracks.’ Ancillary work would likely have to be accounted for by another role of which bandwidth may not be available.²⁴</p>	
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Add or clarifying a formalized, documented EDR grant proposal review step before the application is submitted to the regional office for EDS review (or before the EDS reviews it) to ensure it is of the quality level required for consideration/approval.</p> <p><i>Benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes enhanced distinction between the role of the EDR and EDS, including firm hand-off point • Provides potential to enhance quality of submitted proposals <p><i>Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This step would need to be coordinated so that it occurs efficiently. (For example, can the submitted proposal route to the EDR prior to going to the regional office; or if it first goes to the regional office can the EDS then forward it to the EDR for initial review?) Note that there is significant overlap potential between this recommendation and EDA’s upcoming eRA grants 	

²⁴ As stated in “EDR Key Findings,” at least one office has adopted a single-owner grant application process in which EDRs are responsible for overseeing grant applications from their original ideation through their presentation at IRC (a model which reduces the need for EDSs in those respective regional offices). As mentioned, this model is out of alignment with EDA’s current EDR/EDS position descriptions. Regardless, the question of whether or not EDA should standardize that single-ownership model is a core organizational design question that must be independently answered by EDA’s executive leadership team and that may, when decided, have an impact on the use of this recommendation. More information on how EDA’s executive leadership team should go about answering this organizational design question can be found below, in the portion of this section titled “Additional Overarching Recommendations”

<p>management system (i.e., this recommendation might need to be listed as a requirement in that system).</p> <p>While it is an additional step that could add time to the process, it could also save time in the long run by ensuring that the proposal meets the quality requirements when it is received for processing by the EDS.</p>
<p>Additional Suggestion #1</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Consider establishing a permanent EDR position at the GS-12 level</p> <p><i>Benefits:</i> Establishing a GS-12 position for EDRs provides the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes career ladder to the EDR GS-13, providing guidance and a mechanism for professional advancement.²⁵ • Negates the need for the outreach and substantive proposal development duties including the GS-11 EDS position. • Provides the current EDRs with support in their work so that they can focus on the higher-level work requirements of their position. • Leverages already-established GS-12 EDR PD (in place for time-limited appointments). <p><i>Considerations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement for workload analysis to determine amount and type of EDR GS-12 work. • If workload analysis does not justify GS-12 EDRs in each region, requirement for analysis to determine if fewer GS-12 EDRs could support multiple regions as workload demands. • Determination of functions and duties, such as support to the EDR on outreach and project development or actual responsibility for individual outreach, establishing independent relationships, and grant development.

Economic Development Specialist (EDS)

Role: EDS	GS: 9/11/12
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p><i>Description:</i> The outreach and non-administrative front end aspects of the proposal process for ALL grants in all regions appropriately resides with the EDRs. Once the package is submitted, the administrative and monitoring responsibilities for the grant applications in all regions should be handled by the EDS's. Upon project award the administrative and monitoring responsibilities for non-construction grants can reside with the EDSs, and the administrative and monitoring responsibilities for construction grants can reside with the Civil Engineers in all regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDS's would no longer be responsible for the following grant process steps: (2) Performing Community Outreach (3) Develop project <i>from other than an administrative standpoint focused on organization, completion, and making sure all items are prepared for IRC.</i> (6) Disaster Only - PRC determines if submission is responsive to EDA funding priorities and pre-award compliance verification (<i>PRC function if PRC continues to exist for certain grants</i>) <p><i>Rationale:</i> The position description/knowledge of the EDR specifically speaks to these outreach activities (See EDR Role Description) while the PD and knowledge requirements for the EDS are more administrative and process oriented in nature. Development of the submittal package appears to be from an administrative compliance standpoint and does not require the in-depth knowledge EDR's must possess to perform complex business and program management regulatory oversight.</p>	

²⁵ The GS-13 and GS-12 EDR position descriptions currently use the same language and are only differentiated by their factor levels. With that in mind, under this recommendation, EDA would need to determine what exactly constitutes the GS-12 EDR's responsibilities and how it interplays with the already established GS-13 EDR position.

- (2) Community Outreach is to be conducted by the EDR.
- (3) Develop Project will be regarding administrative aspects (technical completion and eligibility)
- (6) If PRC continues, this is a PRC responsibility

Benefits:

- Promotes clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, to include primary areas of focus
- Enables better staff oversight

Considerations: Under this recommendation, the ownership responsibility for the referenced process steps passes fully to the EDR. A key point of consideration under those circumstances would be to precisely determine at which point the application is handed between EDRs and EDSs (at a level which is likely more granular than the determined process step numbers allow for). Any confusion about this handoff point risks confusing both the EDR and EDS and increases the likelihood that required grant processing items will 'fall through the cracks.' Ancillary work would likely have to be accounted for by another role of which bandwidth may not be available.

Recommendation 2:

Description: Given the variation in the duties of the GS-11 PD in comparison to the EDS GS-12 and GS-9, it is recommended that PDs be reviewed and discussed with senior management and HR to see if the GS-11 PD can be rewritten to align more closely with the duties described in the career ladder description. (See EDS Key Findings, above, for more details.)

Rationale:

The following duties overlap in the GS-11 EDS and EDR PDs. The incumbent:

- Is involved in the solicitation of investments in line with EDA's funding priorities and investment strategy.
- Cultivates relationships with key business, civic community, and local government partners.
- Performs outreach to distressed communities to proactively encourage and facilitate competitive investment proposals.
- Actively assists proponents and/or stakeholders in conceptual project development and structuring to ensure an adequate volume of high-impact proposed projects at every stage of the EDA investment pipeline. This facilitation involves assisting applicants and/or stakeholders in the development of potential EDS project profiles/applications.

These duties are not consistent with the GS-12 EDS target position, nor does the GS-9 level EDS position appear to contain duties and responsibilities that prepare the incumbent for these outreach duties.

Benefits:

- Promotes clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, to include primary areas of focus
- Aligns GS-11 position description with day-to-day practices of (what is likely to be) most GS-11 EDSs across EDA's regional offices.
- Establishes clear career ladder

Considerations:

- The focus of work may be a change from some of the ancillary work that some of the EDSs have taken on and, in some cases, may prefer

Additional Suggestion #1:

Description: Consider adding a GS-13 EDS that is not part of the career ladder (i.e., an independent GS-13 position that would be staffed independently from EDA’s current GS-9/11/12 ladder EDS)²⁶

Benefits:

- Provides opportunity for GS-13 EDS to serve a team lead for a group of EDSs
- Provides opportunity for liaising between the EDRs and EDSs that would be beneficial in addressing any substantive proposal shortcomings that need strengthening or elaboration to meet the quality threshold for approval as well as ongoing collaboration/consultation as may be beneficial.
- Reduces pressure felt by Regional Directors to diagonally promote GS-12 EDSs to GS-13 Analyst positions (see footnote).

Considerations:

- Communication: Would the organization benefit from team leads and/or liaison activities?
- Staffing structure: Would the organization structure support team leads?
- Role definition: If a region has a Supervisory Program Manager, would this impact the feasibility of the team lead concept?

Additional Suggestion #2:

Description: Consider establishing a hybrid EDS/EDR at the GS-12 level

Rationale: Despite classification at 1101, at their core, EDS work seems to reflect much of what is described in the 2010, Position Classification Flysheet for Grants Management Series, GS-1109. This hybrid position could focus on the data analysis of a wide variety of sources; review of appropriate state and local Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS); and assessment of regional economic trends, strengths, and weaknesses to identify the highest-impact, highest policy-priority projects in development ready distressed communities; and work in partnership with and support of EDRs on substantive project development and quality proposals. With the aforementioned analysis work incorporated in this (a hybrid) position (instead of the EDS position where it presently resides), the remaining duties currently in the EDS position description may more aptly be classified in the grants management occupational series. This could also help distinguish the development (EDR) work from the processing (EDS) grants management work.

Benefits:

- Negates the need for the conceptual project development and structuring work currently included in the GS-11 EDS position
- Provides opportunity for EDSs who are looking to expand beyond the “processing” work to experience exposure and support to the outreach and more substantive development functions.

²⁶ During the course of the strategic initiative, the team learned that there is concern about the fact that newly-hired EDSs no longer have a career path to the GS-13 position. The team also learned that, as a workaround to this problem, regions have in several cases diagonally promoted GS-12 EDSs to the GS-13 Analyst position while allowing them to continue performing EDS work. Regional offices have been able to justify this practice due to the notably generic position description that accompanies EDA’s Analyst position; however, it is strongly inadvisable from an organizational design/role definition perspective. This recommendation, if adopted, would once again provide a promotion opportunity for GS-12 EDSs to the GS-13 position and, in doing so, eliminate some of the pressure Regional Directors might feel to diagonally promote high-performing GS-12 EDSs to the GS-13 Analyst position. Note, however, that, as envisioned by the team, this GS-13 would *neither* be a simple reinstatement of the previously discussed legacy GS-13 EDS Position Description (which has significant outreach function overlap with the GS-13 EDR) *nor* a more experienced GS-12 ladder EDS. Rather, the team envisions a position description where the new GS-13 EDS role would function more akin to a processing manager responsible for liaising between EDRs and EDSs throughout the grant processing function. Ultimately, however, if adopted, the exact role responsibilities of this proposed GS-13 (non-ladder) EDS would need to be determined by EDA’s executive leadership.

Considerations:

- Job series: Are there any other duties in the current EDS position description that would negate use of the Grants Management series for the current EDSs should the economic assessment function be placed in the hybrid position?
- Workload: Do the proposed duties for the hybrid position support a full-time position?

Civil Engineer

Role: Civil Engineer	GS: 13
Recommendation 1: <i>Description:</i> Examine and determine the appropriate amount of involvement in the GPRA closeout process. <i>Rationale:</i> Clarity is needed in regard to which aspects of the GPRA closeout process the various roles are responsible for to ensure any and all parties involved understand their responsibilities in the process. <i>Benefits:</i> Civil Engineers will understand expectations, tasks, and required knowledge/skills associated with their role.	

Management/Program Analyst

Role: Management/Program Analyst (non-RLF, non-EDI)	GS: 13/12/11/9
Recommendation 1: <i>Description:</i> Evaluate why some analysts perform non-construction grant process steps listed below. Consider redirecting those steps to the EDS and no longer have the analysts perform them. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysts may perform the following non-construction grant process steps:<ul style="list-style-type: none">(28) Forward grant to respective post-approval project officer(29) Post-award manager sends notification to grantee with invitation to kick-off ("project management conference") call or on-site visit(30) Kick-off call ("project management conference") held to discuss post-award grant process(32) Progress Reports(33) Financial Reports(33.1) Create and sign payment memo(36) Run final closeout reports <i>Rationale:</i> The post-award and close-out functions are not consistent with the analyst PD and fall within the realm of the EDS; therefore, they should be consolidated into the same role. <i>Benefits:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes alignment of duties with official position of record• Eliminates any ambiguity among staff of the role of the analyst <i>Considerations:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current analysts performing non-construction grants work may enjoy those duties and not be happy about no longer performing them. Ancillary work would likely have to be accounted for by another role, such as EDS, of which bandwidth may not be available	

Regional Environmental Officer (REO)

Function: REO	GS: Various, depending on owner
Recommendation 1:	

Description: Consider establishing an EPS position in regions that don't have one to perform the REO functions and eliminating 'dual hat' REO responsibility for those who encumber it (currently Civil Engineers in AuRO and PRO).

Rationale: The 'dual-hat' REO position was identified as a significant legal, process risk several times by stakeholders at different levels (and in both regional and headquarters offices). In addition to reducing risk, the change would lead to enhanced consistency among regions as to who performs this work.

Benefits:

- Reduces legal, process risk associated with EDA performing incorrect environmental processing on grant applications.
- Allows Civil Engineers currently encumbering the REO function so spend more time on their formal responsibilities.²⁷
- Employees selected for positions with this title would know this is their position of record and focus.

Considerations:

- Analyze regional REO workload to determine required staffing.
- If there is not enough work for one position in each region, consider feasibility of one position serving multiple regions if complexity of regulations are not too prohibitive.

Additional Overarching Considerations

Role definition is an especially sensitive topic, given how deeply it touches the lives of every employee. Therefore, coming to a decision on whether and/or how to change roles can be a difficult process, requiring deep engagement and buy-in from across agency leadership.

The individual recommendations above on role definitions are based on the current strategic direction of the organization and the current state of position descriptions and actual day-to-day responsibilities for key EDA positions. It is understood that given expanding funding and hiring, that strategy and organization related to human capital may be examined for improving efficiencies in meeting EDA's mission. There are fundamental questions that need to be addressed by EDA leadership as part of deciding whether to implement the proposed recommendations:

- How important is consistency among the regions in terms of each organization's structure and positions? In this section, the case is made that there is value in consistency for sustaining holistic and productive development of EDA employees, however, some limited amount of variability is likely acceptable.
- If it's not that important or feasible, what are the reasons certain regions need to be organized differently and/or have different positions or the same positions defined differently? What is the threshold that will decide whether the variation is warranted/approved?

These questions cannot be easily answered in a leadership meeting, especially given the context of an evolving operating and budget environment. Continued assessment is needed that takes the findings and recommendations from this document as inputs and performs the following activities:

- Review and update/affirm EDA's strategic direction;

²⁷ Some Civil Engineers currently encumbering the REO function (in addition to their regular job responsibilities) claim that their REO duties take up roughly 75% of their workload bandwidth.

- Define the optimal regional management structure to support that direction
- Forego the current position descriptions and conduct a detailed analysis of the major duties and processes that support that management structure. The proposed recommendations in this document represent an advanced starting point for this analysis, but additional EDA leadership insight is needed to further assess them. This will provide insight into whether current position descriptions are accurate and/or support that structure or need to be updated or rewritten;
- Draft new position descriptions/roles based on/that reflect the major duties identified above and the nature and extent of responsibility for carrying out those duties. (Consider and develop career ladders when building the position descriptions.)
- Align roles (including career progression) to the functions and process steps to be performed;
- Based on the above alignment, make any necessary adjustments to the draft position descriptions and prepare them in final form;
- Coordinate with Human Resources at appropriate intervals throughout this process to facilitate the ultimate classification of the positions and the process for any reorganization;
- Provide a blueprint for reorganization.

After position descriptions are newly defined and classified, EDA could then take further action across various workforce plan elements utilizing the new role definitions:

- **Revisit Competency Assessment:** align competencies and required proficiency levels to new roles based on major duties and skills
- **Hiring and Recruiting:** ensure new position descriptions are consistently used for new postings
- **Training and Development:** consider development of role-specific trainings that are tailored to the specific competencies required of the role
- **Performance Management:** track whether new position descriptions are leading to increased employee satisfaction with their career paths due to increased clarity regarding progression within roles
- **Succession Planning and Supervisor Development:** develop role-specific succession plans as appropriate, to ensure that knowledge is captured within individual role cohorts so that the loss of any given individual or individuals does not hinder EDA's ability to execute its mission

Key Driver 3: Workforce Demand

Methodology

Workforce Demand Modeling Approach

Driving to clarity on competency needs and role definition can help EDA better align on what it means to have a “right-skilled” workforce to support mission execution. Understanding what a “right-sized” workforce looks like requires a different kind of analysis, developing a workforce model that can analyze the need for staff (i.e., workload – or demand for staff) against the availability of staff (i.e., supply of staff). Workforce models can be very complex, accounting for various nuances related to workforce demand (e.g., how to accurately account for different types of workload and the impact to time spent by staff in executing that workload) and workforce supply (e.g., how to accurately account for varying efficiency across individual staff members). As part of this initiative, the team focused its energy on how to better model workforce demand (i.e., workload) in response to leadership concerns that EDA’s historical approach has leaned too much on qualitative input.

Modeling workforce demand is itself a very complex undertaking for an organization like EDA, whose work output (grants) is highly variable in terms of how much effort is needed to “deliver” it. For example, whether an applicant has familiarity with EDA or not can greatly affect how much effort is needed by EDA staff to shepherd their application through the grants management process. Different maturity levels can be pursued in terms of how deeply to try to quantify workload/workforce demand, as described in Figure 19.

Level 4: Prescriptive	Detailed activity-based data collection is utilized to develop as precise an estimate as possible, by quantifying the full range of workload variables as accurately as possible
Level 3: Predictive <i>(Target)</i>	Workload variables are quantified to help estimate needs, greatly reducing reliance on manager/HR intuition—however, data used to model these variables may be subjective (i.e., relying on SME perspectives) or incomplete, limiting ability to make precise estimates
Level 2: Reactive <i>(Current)</i>	While some available data (e.g., historical staff levels and volume of work) may be utilized to help estimate needs, manager/HR intuition is still a central part of the process as many of the variables that could influence workload are not quantified
Level 1: Informal	Significant reliance on manager/HR experience and/or intuition to estimate hiring needs, with limited to no use of data

Figure 19: Maturity Levels for Workload Analysis & Modeling

EDA’s current practice falls in the reactive level. This is not necessarily a “bad” approach, as manager/HR intuition is crucially important for accounting for grant complexities and regional differences in estimating how much workload is expected. EDA’s desire to move to a more predictive level is not intended to negate the importance of this intuition or replace it solely with a data-driven approach, as the team acknowledged that it would be very difficult and time-consuming to try to capture the level of precise data that would be needed to accurately quantify the full range of workload variables at EDA (i.e., a prescriptive approach).

Rather, by creating a workload demand model, the team intended to create a tool for EDA to use along side manager/HR intuition. Such a tool would create a structure for managers to attempt to quantify their

intuition—though the goal is not necessarily to get to precise and accurate estimates, but instead to help identify and test the assumptions behind that intuition over time to open conversations about those assumptions (this will be discussed further in the ensuing “Current State” section).

Data Collected

The model focused on four of the five grants management functions identified in the competency analysis—Processing (pre- and post- approval), SME Review, Evaluation, and Post Award Grants Management (data was collected for the Outreach function as well, but due to the variability of what was received it was not utilized for analysis). To build the workload demand model, several pieces of data were requested from Regional Offices via a Workload Demand Modeling spreadsheet, which was used as the main input for the model:

- The “current state of work” designed to capture workload data as it is experienced under EDA's current level of operations:
 - How much work does a staff member currently perform in a week? Number of grants, provided for each role within their office across each of the four functions.
 - How long does it take? Number of hours worked per week, provided for each role within their office across each of the four functions.
- The “desired state of work” designed to capture workload data for a hypothetical scenario in which EDA's Regional Offices had unlimited resources. I.e.,— if a staff member were able to get through all of their work (active + backlog) in a week:
 - How much work would that be? Number of grants, provided for each role within their office across each of the four functions.
 - How long would it take? Number of hours worked per week, provided for each role within their office across each of the four functions.

Note that the data request was sub-divided into four groups for the Processing and SME Review functions based on construction vs. non-construction grants and high complexity vs. low complexity grants (with the POCs filling out the data call being given discretion to determine what constitutes a high vs. low complexity grant—and asked to document the difference in the spreadsheet).

The Workload Demand Modeling spreadsheets were distributed to all 6 Regional Offices (ATRO, AURO, CRO, DRO, PRO, SRO) Leadership team consisting of Regional Directors, Area Directors, and Admin Directors. The team hosted educational sessions to assist offices in understanding the form and requested inputs. The Workload Demand Modeling spreadsheets were completed by all 6 of our regional offices in August 2021—thus it is important to remember that the data represents a point-in-time snapshot as of August 2021. Also, while data from the Philadelphia Regional Office (PRO) was received, PRO was unavailable for review of their submission and thus validation of their data could not take place due to time constraints (so their results are not shown in further analysis below).

Model Outputs/Analyses

Using the current workload demand data provided by the regional offices, the team conducted three initial analyses for non-outreach grant management functions: *Current Gap*, *Desired Gap*, *Role Definition Alignment Gap*.

The *Current Gap* answers:

- Does my organization have the right number of personnel to perform the work today?
- Does my organization have the right type of workforce to perform the work now?

The *Desired Gap* answers:

- Does my organization have the right number of personnel to perform *all their work without backlog* today?
- Does my organization have the right type of workforce to perform *all their work without backlog* now?

The *Role Definition Alignment Gap* specifically assumes that the Role Definition recommendations described earlier are followed, resulting in shift of workload from various roles to EDSs. After making that manual adjustment, the analysis then answers the same *Desired Gap* questions:

- Does my organization have the right number of personnel to perform *all their work without backlog* today?
- Does my organization have the right type of workforce to perform *all their work without backlog* now?

Summary level results of these analyses are provided in the next section, and more detailed regional results can be found in the Appendix (though AURO data is also provided in the body of this report as an example of this analysis on a regional level). Terms used in the analysis include:

- **Total contributing staff (FTE filled positions):** Number of employees in the region according to July 2021 organizational chart in roles contributing to the grant management process.
- **Current FTE demand:** Data submitted by regions of work performed based on average weekly workload.
- **Current FTE surplus/(gap):** Surplus (+)/Gap (-) in FTE based on current workload and staffing, i.e., not accounting for vacancies. 'Overall' accounts for all contributing positions. 'Core GM (grant management) contributors' refers to positions with significant whose surplus FTE would presumably be available for grants management work.
- **Desired FTE demand:** Data submitted by regions of work desired to be performed based on average weekly workload, based on ideal conditions of time, resources, and structure. This method captures how much time should be devoted per person per function.
- **Change in workload demand (FTE):** Difference between current and desired workload demand.
- **Total contributing positions (FTE filled and vacant):** total allocated positions in the region, including permanent, temporary, contracted, and vacant) according to July 2021 organizational chart.
- **Future FTE surplus/(gap):** Surplus (+)/Gap (-) in FTE based on desired workload and staffing, i.e., assuming vacancies are filled by new employees. 'Overall' accounts for all contributing positions. 'Core GM (grant management) contributors' refers to positions whose surplus FTE would presumably be available for grants management work.

Current State Overview

Current Gap

Based on the current gap analysis, three regional offices do not have sufficient employees to meet their respective workload demand for grants management. Additionally, data suggests that the EDS and Civil

Engineer roles are generally understaffed across offices. Finally, all offices have multiple vacancies due to ARPA funding.

In the Current Workforce Gap table below, a negative workforce gap value reflects the number of additional employees needed. A positive value, or surplus, means an expected surplus-to-need situation.

Table 9: Current Workforce Gap (FTE filled) for Regional Offices

	SRO	ATRO	AURO	DRO	CRO
Total contributing staff (FTE filled positions)	37	22	24	31	24
Total contributing staff- core GM contributors	24	19	16	19	16
Current FTE Demand- core GM contributors	23.2	18.4	19.1	18	20.0
Current FTE surplus/(gap) – core GM contributors	0.8	1.4	(3.1)	1.0	(4.0)

As seen in Table 9, two of five RO's showcased a decrease of staff from total contributing staff - core grants management contributors to the Current Demand of FTEs around the core grants management contributors. These decreases show that staff are thinly spread around the grants management process and additional support is needed for them. In the case of SRO and DRO and ATRO, there is a positive grants management staffing gap (surplus) of about 1 employee which shows that these offices are almost optimally staffed but can be slightly internally reallocated to have core grants management staff aid other processes outside the grants management process. The negative numbers in the "Current FTE surplus/(gap) – core GM contributors" category can be caused by a variety of pain points but, generally speaking, can be contributed to the fact that EDA staff are working more than their prescribed 40-hour work weeks in these offices and are still not able to complete the work that they need to do.

Table 10: Desired Workforce Gap and Current FTE Comparison (FTE filled) for Regional Offices

	SRO	ATRO	AURO	DRO	CRO
Desired FTE demand- core GM contributions (FTE Filled)	21.2	16.7	17.6	20.1	16.3
Current FTE demand- core GM contributions (FTE Filled)	23.2	18.4	19.1	18	20.0
Increase/(Decrease) in workload demand FTE- core GM contributions	(2.0)	(1.7)	(1.5)	2.1	(4.7)

As seen in Table 10, four of five RO responses reflected a decrease between their current demand and desired demand, indicating that current staff are overstretched in non-outreach grants management functions. To secure sustainable productivity, ROs with gaps here must identify and realize opportunities for efficiency gains and/or add FTE to their team. The baseline established by desired state, whereby most regional offices need more staff to work on the grants management process, predicts that as EDA's grants

management workload increases, so will the need for most of its regional offices to onboard more grants management staff. The negative gap shown across four of five regions in the table above is largely due to a combination of two factors- - a desire to reduce workload and a need for higher efficiency in workload performed. All regional offices noted that their desired state includes a decrease in workload, but only two out of five indicated a desired increase in efficiency. DRO's positive gap explained by its desire to keep the same level of efficiency of work but engage other staff members in the grants management process. Note that DRO also has fewer core grants management contributor vacancies to fill.

To showcase the implications of the negative gap demonstrated in Table 10, consider CRO, which indicated a gap of 4.7 FTE between current and desired state grants management operations. This gap indicates that CRO's current grants management staff are currently picking up about 188 (4.7*40) additional hours of work every week, just across the grants management process. As CRO's current staff continue to see more workload, which is likely due to EDA's recent ARP Act funding allocation, this gap will continue to increase. A regional breakdown regarding the changes caused by current to desired state is shown in Appendix C.

Recommendations for Consideration

Desired Gap

When the desired demand state is compared to the total available positions supporting grants management, four of five regional offices have a surplus of core grants management contributors FTE available. These 'core GM contributors' include EDS, Supervisory Program Managers, Civil Engineers, EPS, EDA, and Program and Management Analysts, depending on the RO. On its face, these results show room for workload to rise as SRO, ATRO, DRO, and CRO become fully staffed and efficient, but that obscures challenges to role definition such as who should be supporting grants management tasks, and how much they should be doing so, on a regional level. The individual RO analyses by position present a more detailed breakdown of need and consider the ability to leverage vacancies to potentially fill gaps. Note, however, that EDA's workload is projected rise due to ARPA funding, so the Agency should continue to collect updated desired state data where the model should be housed, owned, and managed by OFMS's budget division, because surpluses that are currently reflected in data captured may not be enough to staff future workload once it is fully realized.

Table 11: Desired Workforce Gap (FTE filled and vacant) for Regional Offices

	SRO	ATRO	AURO	DRO	CRO
Total contributing positions (FTE filled and vacant)	43	27	26	37	33
Future Contributing Positions- core GM contributors (FTE Filled and Vacant)	29	24	18	22	22
Desired FTE demand- core GM contributors (FTE Filled and Vacancies)	35.1	28.1	17.6	27.8	27.7
Future FTE surplus/(gap) – core GM contributors	6.1	4.1	(0.4)	5.8	5.7

Regional office breakdowns, including position-by-position data and analysis, can be found in Appendix C.

Role Definition Alignment Gap

In the Role Definition Alignment Gap analysis, the team aligns role definitions with the workload demand data to capture the amount of grants management work that roles are performing beyond their definition. In this analysis, those hours currently performed outside the role definition are counted and “taken away.” Those hours relinquished should be largely subsumed by the EDS role, from a broad EDA sense of role definition. Therefore, the Role Definition Alignment Gap Analysis should show roughly how many additional EDSs are needed to fulfill the grants management workload demand. The EDS, however, can be a placeholder for other positions in this analysis, depending on regional preference, and is shown below as an example overview.

Under this premise, Table 11 below shows the FTE gaps and surplus for the EDS role across the regions. The “additional adjusted EDS FTE” numbers are those FTE “taken” from roles that should not be performing them, per role definitions. In the last row, negative numbers (in parenthesis) are gaps, while positive numbers indicate surplus and are a subset of the overall gap that exists. These results exhibit grant management workforce gaps between the current state (total EDS positions) and the “desired” state supported by role definition analysis and Regional Office workload data. If workload were distributed to enhance productivity for AD, Admin, and Analyst roles, most ROs would be quantifiably understaffed for non-outreach grants management functions. This means there is opportunity to improve overall service for grantees and improve internal organizational effectiveness. By having the closest FTE gap/surplus to zero, AURO is most closely aligned with desired EDS state with their current arrangement. ATRO, DRO, and CRO meanwhile are multiple FTE under optimal alignment.

Table 12: Example- EDS adjusted FTE gap or surplus by region based on role definition

EDS FTE	SRO EDS	ATRO EDS	AURO EDS	DRO EDS	CRO EDS
Desired EDS FTE demand	12.4	2.3	4.6	10.7	10.0
Additional needed EDS FTE	3.9	3.9	3.5	3.3	3.0
Total EDS FTE demand	16.3	6.2	7.2	14.0	13.0
Total EDS positions	12.0	4.0	9.0	10.0	11.0
EDS FTE surplus/(gap)	(4.3)	(2.2)	1.8	(4.0)	(2.0)

In this document’s Role Definition section, seven key roles were analyzed for the work their incumbents should be performing based on position descriptions and regional factors. That role definition assessment identified four roles which have core functions outside of non-outreach grants management functions, whether entirely or partially: Area Director, Administrative Director, EDR, and Management and/or Program Analyst (excluding those working in an RLF or EDI capacity). Based on the role alignment to grants management process steps, the relevant hours for the Workload Demand tables were adjusted to align with the process steps/functions. For example, if an Analyst currently spends 10 hours/week on Processing, which the role definition suggests they should not, the adjusted hours would be zero. If a role is aligned to the function per the role definition, then the adjusted hours are the desired hours for that role and function reported by the regions. The roles aligned to the grants management functions in the following way:

Table 13: Grants Management Functions captured per role through the WF Demand Model

Area Director	Admin Director	Analyst	EDR
Processing	Evaluation	None	Processing
SME Review			Evaluation
Evaluation			
Post- Award Grants Management			

By utilizing Role Definition within the Workload Demand Model Data, EDA can optimally add staff to mitigate the overall gap across regional offices (Table 10). There is a need across four of five regional offices for EDSs. As workload increases, EDA knows that it will need more staff, but it should also consider that these should be *optimally aligned* staff (with regard to role definition). Where staff are placed, and what duties they perform, is a crucial point of consideration when planning for workforce demand, because an overabundance of crossover work (i.e., across roles) can quickly start to burden a given regional office. We recommend that EDA study how role definition impact RO staffing gaps and staff accordingly.

The pages that follow provide the current- and desired-state gap analysis for the Austin Regional Office. Gap analyses for the other four offices from which data was collected can be found in Appendix C.

Additional Detail (AURO Example)

AURO Current Gap and Desired Gap

According to AURO's workload demand data, the Area Director, Administrative Director, Civil Engineer, EDR, EDS, and Analyst roles are involved in non-outreach grant management functions. Below is AURO's gap analysis for the non-outreach grant management functions, including Processing (Pre- and Post- Approval), SME Review, Evaluation, and Post- Award Grants Management.

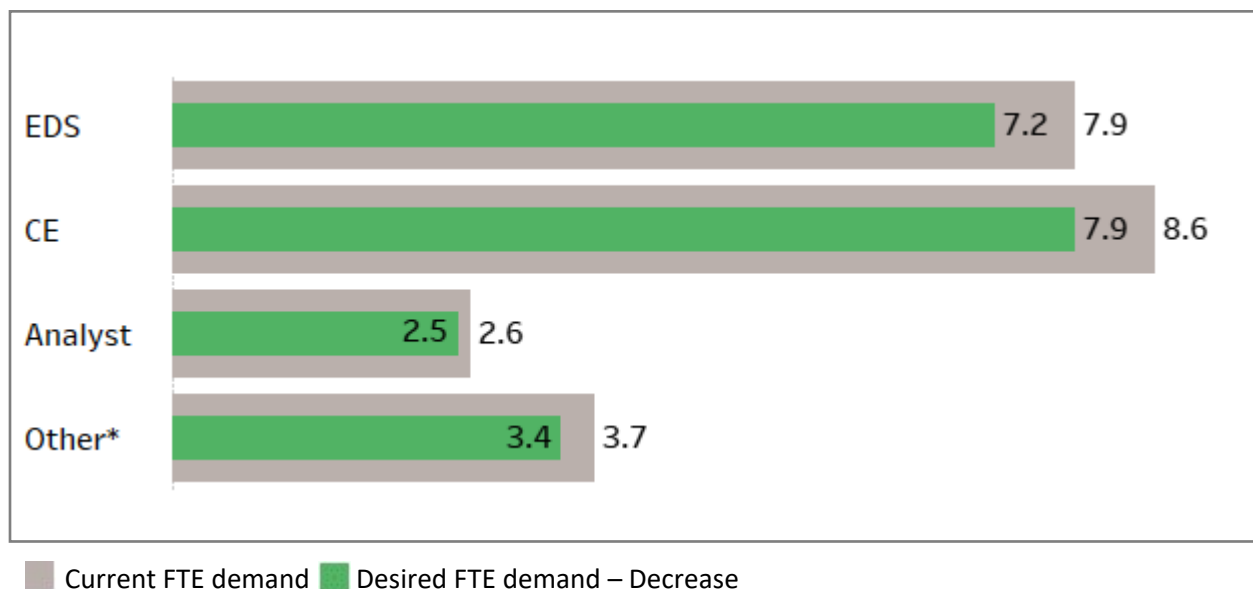


Figure 20: AURO FTE Gap for non- outreach grant management functions

Table 14: AURO FTE Gap for non-outreach grant management functions

AURO	EDS	Analyst	CE	Other*	Total
Total contributing staff (FTE filled positions)	7	3	6	8	24
Current FTE demand	7.9	2.6	8.6	3.7	22.8
Current FTE surplus/(gap) – overall	(0.9)	0.4	(2.6)	4.3	1.2
Current FTE surplus/(gap) – core GM contributors	(0.9)	0.4	(2.6)	--	(3.1)
Total contributing positions (FTE filled and vacant)	9	3	6	8	26
Desired FTE demand	7.2	2.5	7.9	3.4	21.0
Future FTE surplus/(gap) – overall	1.8	0.5	(1.9)	4.6	5.0
Future FTE surplus/(gap) – core GM contributors	1.8	0.5	(1.9)	--	0.4
Desired FTE demand	7.2	2.5	7.9	3.4	21.0
Current FTE demand	7.9	2.6	8.6	3.7	22.8
Increase/(Decrease) in workload demand FTE	(.5)	(0.1)	(0.6)	(0.3)	(1.8)

* AURO roles (AD, Admin, EDR) that perform - or should perform - majority of work outside grants management process. The gap/surplus of these roles are not applicable to grants management functions.

As reported by AURO, the region's current workload demand is equivalent to 22.8 FTE. Per the July 2021 organizational chart, AURO has 24 filled, contributing positions across EDS, Analyst, CE, Area Director, Admin Director, and EDR roles. While there is a total surplus of 1.2 FTE across these roles, the primary grants management contributors, EDS and CE, are currently understaffed by 0.9 and 2.6 FTE respectively. EDR, Area Director, and Admin Director roles also contribute to the grants management process but could not be expected to contribute their surplus based on their responsibilities. Therefore, the current FTE gap is 3.1 among core grants management contributors (EDS, Analysts, and CE).

The current FTE demand reported for non-outreach grant management functions is 22.8 FTE and the desired demand is 21.0 FTE, leaving a decreasing change in workload FTE of 3.2. AURO anticipates workload demand falling for AD, Admin Director, Analyst, CE, and EDS roles. The overall decline from current to desired workload suggests potential efficiency gains.

When considering the future state in which all positions are filled, the largest FTE gap for AURO is for the Civil Engineer role. The office anticipates 8.6 FTE Civil Engineer work while having six Civil Engineer positions. The source of this FTE growth is the shift of Processing workload from Area Director, Admin Director, EDS, and Analysts to the Civil Engineer. In the desired state of Processing, AURO foresees only Civil Engineer role involved for construction and non-construction grants. In turn, this causes FTE surpluses among Analyst (0.4), and AD, Admin, and EDR roles (4.3 FTE). Only looking at core grants management contributors, EDS, Analysts, and CE, the future FTE gap is .4.

AURO Role Definition Alignment Gap

The Role Definition Alignment considers proposed role definitions, which for certain positions removes or reduces workload in the grant management functions. For AURO, the roles are Area Director, Admin Director, Analyst, and EDR (Table 15).

Table 15. AURO adjusted grant management functions hours

Function	Hours	AD	Admin	Analyst	EDR	Total
Processing	Current	40	4	14	0	58
<i>Roles: AD, EDR</i>	Adjusted	0	0	0	0	0
Evaluation	Current	20	10	30	50	110
<i>Roles: AD, Admin, EDR</i>	Adjusted	20	10	0	50	80
SME Review	Current	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Roles: AD</i>	Adjusted	0	0	0	0	0
Post-Award Grants Management	Current	4	1	52	0	57
<i>Roles: AD</i>	Adjusted	4	0	0	0	4
Total	Current	64	15	96	50	225
	Adjusted	24	10	0	50	84
Difference:		-40	-5	-96	0	-141

For AURO, there are 141 weekly hours, or 3.5 FTE, that should no longer be performed by the positions above according to the role definition and AURO workload demand inputs. The AURO workload data removes all the positions from Processing work. The role definitions remove the Evaluation work for the Analyst and the Grants Management work from the Admin Director and Analysts. The Analyst role sees the biggest downward swing, largely due to its lack of grant management functions according to the role definition.

In terms of the AURO EDS, the findings above suggest 3.5 additional FTE which creates a total demand of 8.1 FTE when added to AURO's reported future FTE demand (Table 16). At present, AURO has nine EDS positions, resulting in an FTE surplus of 0.9.

Table 16. AURO EDS total demand based on workload and role definition

EDS FTE Gap	Desired FTE demand	Additional adjusted FTE	Total FTE demand	Total EDS positions	FTE surplus/ (gap)
AURO EDS	4.6	3.5	7.9	9	0.9

Additional Overarching Considerations

As described in the Methodology section, this Workload Demand model is not intended to completely replace the role of manager intuition in estimating workload (and thus informing requests for additional staffing). If EDA did desire to move to a more prescriptive (maturity level 4) approach, EDA would need to perform an activity-based time use survey to better understand at the individual level how much time is spent on different process steps and in different situations caused by variations in workload drivers.

EDA should consider formalizing a regular process to use the existing predictive Workload Demand model, though, instead of pursuing a more prescriptive approach. The data and analysis currently captured in the model is based on a point-in-time snapshot of input data from August 2021. EDA should consider refreshing inputs for the model on a quarterly basis and documenting how the resulting outputs change over time. If the gap between the “current state of work” and “desired state of work” is close to zero in a given refresh, that would suggest that the given RO should be content with their current level of staffing. However, acknowledging that the data being captured is imperfect, it is very possible that the RO might still believe they need additional staff—which would suggest a disconnect between their lived experience (I need more staff) and how they have quantified their intuition (how much time I think my staff is spending on activities / how much time I think my staff should be spending on activities). Identifying these disconnects on a quarterly basis can lead to richer discussions regarding the drivers behind staffing needs.

EDA might also consider investing time to improve the model itself. For example, developing requirements for the new eRA grants management system to help standardize the use of tracking process milestones for individual grants could help. This would help measure cycle time, not level of effort, but it would provide another data point to test assumptions and intuition—e.g., the amount of grants identified by the grants management system as being worked in each function for a given week snapshot could be compared against the self-reported amount of time spent by staff on that function through the Workload Demand model as another sanity check. EDA can also invest time into developing the relationship between the type of grants and workload. Since the current categories (high/ low complexity for construction/non construction grants) are large and all encompassing, diving into the specific characteristics that grants have that can increase workload will help advance the Demand model.

Strategies to Achieve & Maintain Desired Workforce Composition

Hiring and Recruiting

Current State

The DOC OIG's 2019 report highlighted a growing need for EDA to address its hiring and recruitment efforts given its significant upward trajectory in disaster funding. To mitigate risk, the Agency was tasked with expanding its current hiring strategies to "acquire sufficient personnel with relevant experience to oversee grantees". In reviewing employee survey data, current hiring practices, and key stakeholder interview notes, the team uncovered several challenges and opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its grants management hiring efforts. This data was analyzed and distilled to create a hiring and recruiting plan.²⁸

EDA currently hires candidates for permanent, term, and contractor positions and does not have a formal recruitment plan in place to find and hire talent. In the place of such a plan, EDA's offices have developed a network of recruiting and hiring strategies that are effective to varying degrees. Through interviews, it was determined that job listings are made on USAJOBS.gov, which serves as the primary point of entry for most prospective EDA applicants. Secondary strategies for job postings include targeting the use of professional associations and organizations and have expanded to include a focus on attracting more diverse candidates through tools such as the Diversity.com platform. To augment these strategies, EDA leverages its current social media platforms (although external engagement with these platforms is notably limited).

As noted during EDA's 2019-2020 Business Process Review, each of EDA's offices is independently responsible for interfacing with the Agency's OFMS hiring coordinators and, through those coordinators, DOC's Department-wide HR service provider. At the Agency level, EDA relies on that service provider, Enterprise Services, to complete the core tasks of its hiring function.

Regional office supervisors have a decent amount of autonomy in determining how to staff and deploy resources. This limits the ability for any individual at EDA – particularly those in OFMS – to form a holistic view of the Agency's governance and grants management needs. In this current structure, Regional and Area Directors determine when and where resources are needed, collaborating with their respective Administrative Directors and EDA's OFMS to oversee steps required to hire and deploy staff into vacant positions as needed. Though the logistical exercise of staffing involves EDA HQ, minimal strategic conversations take place between regional office and headquarters once regional office stakeholders decide what positions they want to fill. Though this approach generally serves each office, it does not lend to the holistic, agency-wide decision making that EDA should undertake to best support its mission.

As for the logistical process of recruitment, hiring actions at EDA have been known to be quite slow under regular circumstances. Department of Commerce reported that as of Q3 FY21, it takes an average of 149 days to hire a new permanent employee against the benchmark of 65 days. For a particularly extreme example of the length of EDA's hiring cycle, one BPR interviewee noted that it had once taken two years to hire a permanent FTE resource for a position that they were trying to fill in their office. In 2020, however, EDA received exempt Schedule A term hiring authority that allowed it to quickly upstaff in

²⁸ Note that staff deployment strategies are found in the "Staffing and Deployment" section of this document and specifically address how EDA can more appropriately deploy their staffing needs

response to its influx of CARES funding. Due to this exemption, EDA was able to hire almost 90 people in 2020. This represented a significant FTE increase for EDA, whose permanent FTE supply normally sits below 200 people. In 2021, EDA had this exempt hiring authority extended in response to its ARP Act funding allocation. It is unknown whether EDA will retain Schedule A hiring authority through future funding supplemental allocations.

As of July 2021, EDA had already hired 37 individuals for the year, bringing EDA's total staff count to about 300 people. In the coming months, this number is expected to drastically increase as the Agency moves to fill its remaining 89 vacancies, many of which represent new term positions created with money by the ARP supplemental. EDA expects to leverage lessons learned from its 2020 CARES hiring efforts to aid in this process.

Detailed hiring figures can be found below. Additional detail on other trends in EDA's current staff supply can be found in this Workforce Plan's "Current Workforce Analysis" section.

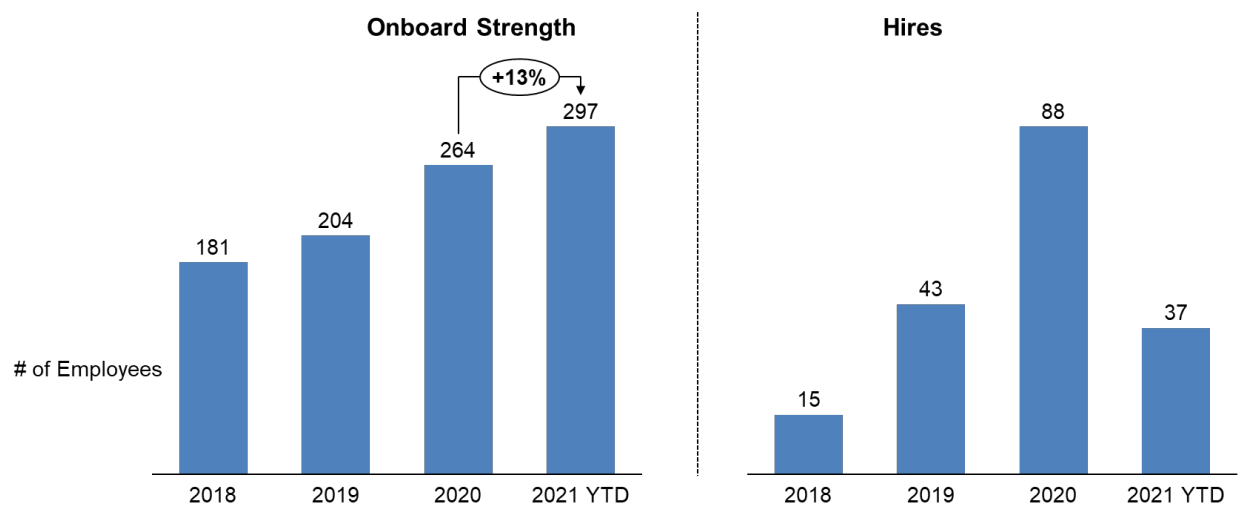


Figure 21: Onboarding Strength and Hiring for EDA

Current-State Pain Points

Several specific hiring and recruiting pain points were documented by the team. Many of these challenges have been identified over recent years, only to be exacerbated by the need to quickly meet EDA's burgeoning human capital demands under the CARES and ARP Acts.

- **Limited standardized processes across regional offices**
 - As mentioned in the previous section, regional office leadership in each office has developed its own process to perform the regional office-owned portion of the EDA hiring process. While autonomy may be good in some cases, limited visibility to cross-office best practices exists.
- **Limited opportunity to implement strategic, agency-wide staffing decisions**
 - As noted, regional offices have been granted a large amount of autonomy in their hiring decisions and as such are generally free to staff resources as they see fit (budget allowing) without considering the broader strategic goals of EDA HQ.

- **Limited visibility from regional office staff into the HQ recruiting/hiring process**
 - Administrative Directors cite having ‘limited process visibility’ into the HQ portion of the hiring/recruitment process and not being able to discern ‘who does what.’ This can make it difficult for them to know where things stand through the hiring cycle.
- **Slow employee hiring process (*prior to exempt hiring authority*)**
 - EDA’s end-to-end hiring process under non-exempt hiring authority frequently takes six months. As mentioned, in one notable case captured during EDA’s Business Process Review, a regional office reported that it took more than two years to hire for a single permanent FTE position. Note that, when leveraging Schedule A Hiring Authority, EDA’s process can take as little as 5 days to complete the security process expediting the overall hiring effort to about 30 days , but EDA may lose its Schedule A Hiring Authority following the completion of ARP/CARES funding distribution.
 - This is a significant problem for EDA given the large number and percentage of EDA’s permanent staff that will be eligible for retirement within the next ten years. (See the workforce plan’s “Grants Management Succession Planning & Supervisor Development” section for more information on upcoming retirement eligibility.)
- **Limited access to tools/technology necessary to track, forecast, and report on recruitment efforts**
 - Building off the previous two pain points, IPT members cite that they have little in terms of useful tools that they can leverage to help track and forecast their recruitment needs. This adds difficulty to the already challenging process of coordinating hiring actions across regional offices and headquarters.²⁹
- **Out-of-date position descriptions which reflect EDA’s inconsistent use of competencies (*or use of competencies that do not reflect the specific work done by EDA staff members*)**
 - IPT members revealed that this can lead to EDA hiring individuals who do not have the right skills – or the right balance of skills – to perform their jobs.
- **Difficulty associated with establishing a deep candidate pool**
 - EDA’s limited candidate pool represents a substantial risk to the Agency given the serious impact that a single vacancy can have on EDA’s ability to perform its grant process. This is particularly true for critical, process gate-keeper positions such as the Environmental Protection Specialist and the Civil Engineer. Without a candidate pool to backfill vacancies, regional offices, many of which currently rely on ‘one-deep’ staffing solutions that have multiple points of failure, are one departure away from realizing seriously hampered – or even halted – business processes.

Recommendations for Consideration

The team initiated several activities to address the documented pain points to develop a formal hiring and recruiting roadmap. In doing so, input was collected from stakeholders within the IPT community and OFMS. The following internal and external strategies have been recommended with the goal to create a

²⁹ The team recognizes that other strategic initiatives have some overlapping alignment with this pain point.

long-lasting set of strategies that, when implemented together, can help EDA hire and recruit the high-quality professionals it needs to meet its mission. This may also be inclusive of considering remote workers due to the post Covid environment to expand the depth of candidates. (EDA Taskforce is currently reviewing).

- **Mitigate EDA’s Lengthy Hiring Process Timeline**
 - **Continue utilizing Schedule A authority for as long as possible to reduce the lengthy hiring process.**
 - **Additional Consideration:** Be sure to capture and retain best practices developed during its existence (e.g., tracking term hire candidates in a centralized internal database) for continued use after it disappears.
 - **Continue developing a targeted, accelerated onboarding program for new term hires that enables them to more quickly get up to speed.** Helping term hires quickly learn their roles and responsibilities is critical to ensuring that they are able to serve as effective employees prior to the end of their time at the Agency. (For more on Training & Development, see the workforce plan’s “Training & Development” section.)
- **Develop a Deep Candidate Pool**
 - **Leverage referral bonuses judiciously, being sure to follow correct OPM guidance.** Referral programs provide an organization with the ability to educate internal personnel about job openings while providing incentive for those personnel to actively engage in the organization recruiting and hiring processes. Use of referral bonuses can broaden the reach of an organization’s job postings to candidates that might not see them otherwise while also improving agency culture, and job satisfaction.
 - **Additional Consideration:** Showcasing the recipients of referral bonuses can aid in the Agency’s efforts to promote them.
 - **Sharpen internal and external use of regular, agency-wide job update alerts in order to raise awareness regarding job postings as they are created.** An intentional approach to market and promote opportunities can improve agency culture by creating another avenue for staff connectedness and ensuring that staff have job descriptions readily available to send to their networks should they wish to do so.
 - **Additional Consideration:** The Public Affairs team should consider ways in which it could strengthen its influence both internally and externally. As an example, preliminary conversations indicate that the EDA Website’s “Careers” page could benefit from a general visual refresh in addition to the use of a chat box, EDA-specific org hiring data, and other enhancements. Note that this strategy has significant cross-pollination potential with EDA’s intranet, which would provide an excellent location to post job alerts.
 - **Develop recruiting artifacts that increase awareness of EDA’s culture.** EDA’s economic development mission, and the work that the Agency performs, is singular within the federal government. Spotlighting its mission, and the culture the mission has fostered, can yield dividends. EDA should leverage this uniqueness to create cultural content that prospective candidates would not be able to find at other federal agencies.

- **Additional Consideration:** Written examples include the creation of a public-facing economic development podcast or hiring and recruitment blog posts³⁰; audio-video examples the creation of videos that highlight EDA’s impact while answering questions about EDA’s hiring process can be developed. This can be done through written or audio-video format (or both) and once again offers significant synergistic potential with EDA’s in-development Intranet.
 - **Dependency:** The development of activities and programming will need a specified group or ‘owner’ to drive employees to use and share the content with their networks. This activity can be evaluated to align to referral bonuses or other agency employee incremental bonus options available, mentioned above.
- **Leverage EDA’s suite of social media platforms to proactively grow its candidate pool at both the HQ and regional office levels.** This is particularly important for EDA’s critical roles – such as the regional office-based Environmental Protection Specialist or the HQ-based Congressional Affairs Specialist.
 - **Additional Consideration:** Though EDA already leverages several social media platforms, public engagement levels with those platforms is low. Consider identifying a Search Engine Optimization (SEO) subject matter expert who could develop strategies to boost engagement and better position recruiting needs.
- **Incorporate standardized recruiting and hiring messages into community outreach activities.** Spreading external awareness about EDA’s recruiting and hiring needs is a critical component of strengthening the Agency’s candidate pool and soliciting applications from top talent across the country. By leveraging its existing federal relationships to this end, the Agency can further stimulate community interest in temporary, permanent, and contracting work opportunities.
 - **Additional Considerations:**
 - This can be achieved by developing correspondence tactics such as creating and leveraging constituent email lists and developing marketing campaigns through which to distribute recruiting artifacts to targeted audiences. The EDI role is well-positioned to perform this type of outreach work through its Federal Interagency Resource Exchanges (FIREs).
 - Expanding outreach strategies to incorporate EDA’s partner agencies, such as MBDA and NADO, would also be beneficial.
- **Host formal recruiting and hiring informational sessions.** Developing a cadence of regularly hosted information sessions can help inform potential candidates about life at EDA and can provide them with a look into the Agency via the info sessions’ hosts.
- **Revisit EDA’s discontinued college internship program.** Reestablishing EDA’s internship program will help EDA attract promising candidates that can augment EDA’s overall long-term candidate pool. An internship program will help EDA create a pipeline of individuals that are interested in being hired by EDA at some point in the future rather than today. This can help smooth future spikes in hiring demand.

³⁰ EDA’s current internal podcast, “The Path,” hosted by David Ives in PNPd, may serve as a useful point of reference.

- **Additional Consideration:** Be sure to evaluate why EDA's college internship program was previously discontinued and improve upon any pain points previously identified.
- **Expand beyond EDA's current job posting site.** Today, EDA utilizes USAJobs.gov as its primary source to find candidates (in addition to conducting targeted recruitment activities through various organizations). However, even if applications must ultimately be submitted through USAJobs.com, EDA can improve the public visibility of its job postings by crosslinking to other websites while also capitalizing on Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) Interagency Agreements of staff for mission assignments that have transferrable skills utilizing the Schedule A Hiring Authority pathway. Additionally, creating strategies to reach multi-cultural communities can further align EDA to meet all underserved communities (e.g: job fairs, websites, chamber of commerce engagement, etc.). Also, for more senior positions, consider executive recruitment sites as well.
 - **Other websites to consider include:**
 - CareersInGovernment.com
 - GovtJobs.com
 - CareerOneStop.org
 - Indeed.com
 - GovernmentJobs.com.
 - Flexjobs.com
 - LinkedIn.com
 - Diversity.com (a subscription to which is already being procured by the Agency)
 - Latpro.com
 - Asianhires.com
 - ExecuNet.com
- **Consider moving to a Pay Banding Strategy.** Moving from the GS scale can provide more flexibility to attract talent, breaking the 15 GS scales into four or five bands. These pay bands typically range from GS-1 to GS-5, GS-6 to GS-11, GS-12 to GS-13 and GS-14 to GS-15. Each pay band has a minimum and maximum pay allowing performance to drive pay and not education and experience. EDA can consider grouping GS 1-5 (band 1), GS 6-10 (band 2), GS 11-12 (band 3), GS 14-15 (band 4) and all SES jobs in band 5. This strategy can be also tied to performance management, another tool for supervisors to use leverage performance commensurate to an employee's production.
- **Implement Governance and Oversight to Assist Regional Office Hiring Efforts**
 - **Identify or establish key points of contact at headquarters with oversight responsibility for regional office hiring and recruitment.**
 - **Suggested Steps:**
 - Develop and launch a formal kick off to inform key hiring personnel and provide proper guidance and contact information
 - Identify a Regional Hiring and Recruiting Ambassador who can be responsible for 'soft recruitment' practices to build a pipeline of leads.

This role can be piloted within the HQ hierarchy, and if successful, grow to ultimately align to all regions.

- Identify, train and develop metrics for the Regional Ambassador role. (Assess if there is a position description or if this is a new role to be written).
 - Identify new roles for technical assistance and intake to address increased inquiries and volume
 - **Additional Consideration:** A hiring taskforce can identify scope, roles, and processes to implement oversight and support. (Note that additional information on staffing and deployment is captured in this document’s “Staffing and Deployment” section).
 - **Promote hiring process transparency between regional offices.** Schedule quarterly EDA-wide recruitment meetings, as well as region-HQ meetings, to share best practices, develop relationships, and update hiring needs and statuses. Leverage these collaborative meetings to tap cross-office recruitment opportunities (both for vacant positions and for current employees looking to transfer offices).
 - **Additional Consideration:** EDA can develop a shared, up-to-date database of office-level recruitment needs that is accessible by recruitment managers across the Agency to help promote transparency.
- **Leverage New Role Definitions and Competencies to Improve Hiring Quality**
 - **Enhance job descriptions to reflect competencies as defined and required per role, being sure to leverage EDA’s newly created competency model**
 - **Additional Consideration:** Each role’s competencies should be prioritized or weighted so a candidate can gain a clearer understanding of how he or she aligns with a role’s requirements.
 - **Dependency:** As its wording implies, this recommendation is dependent upon EDA’s reconfiguration of role definitions to better match its future-state desires, whether those definitions be those proposed by this team or something else entirely. (For more information, see the section of this document titled “Role Definition.”)
- **Enhance and Develop Recruiting and Hiring Tools**
 - **Consider adopting the team’s Workload Demand Model to augment EDA’s strategic forecasting capabilities for its FTE requirements.**³¹
 - **Suggested Steps:**
 - Assign model oversight responsibility to an EDA staff member – preferably at headquarters – and establish a regular cadence by which the model is leveraged as a beneficial, quantitative additive in hiring considerations

³¹ Should the Agency decide against future use of the Workload Demand Model, EDA should nevertheless establish formal procedures that can aid in measuring and predicting workloads based on a variety of push and pull factors.

- Establish a recurring process by which model inputs are updated across offices. Iterate on the model through future versions to consider staffing needs related to title grading and per-state FTE counts.
 - Review data outputs from beta testing to determine efficacy. Collect enhanced requirements to establish HQ forecasting mechanisms based on leadership adoption.
 - **Additional Consideration:** The Workload Demand Model has been designed to enable EDA to incorporate more data-driven decision making into its hiring processes. It has been designed to accommodate the unique structure of each office as it exists in 2021 while also providing a robust and accurate method for key recruiting and hiring stakeholders (at both OFMS and the regional offices) to forecast future human capital needs in a unified manner. Future iterations of this model could be designed to model EDA's hiring needs as the Agency continues to expand and add grants management capacity across offices.
- **Leverage Alternative Staffing Strategies to Alleviate Stress on Hiring Infrastructure**
 - **Utilize contractors to manage staffing intake/outreach inquiries.** Using contractors to fulfill these day-to-day inquiries would allow OFMS's dedicated human resources staff to spend more time tackling hiring and recruitment issues that are more strategic in nature.
 - **Evaluate the efficacy of instituting a Public – Private Talent Exchange.** This concept is supported by the "Intergovernmental Personnel Act, and the "Government Employees Training Act" and is used by the Veterans Administration, the Navy, and NASA. It would enable the Agency to deploy civil servants to the private sector, to host private-sector employees on detail, or both. The premise of the exchange would be to facilitate cross-sector sharing of ideas, perspectives and skills while improving public service and supporting private enterprise. Also a hiring technique, such an exchange can be used to expose those who may be interested in working in the public sector (particularly those from the Millennial Gen Z Generations) with the opportunity to gain firsthand experience in the public sector environment by filling open positions via short term employment opportunities. EDA can consider using its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), currently in place with other agencies, to support this effort. Otherwise, this program would require congressional approval.
 - **Consider assigning post-approval workload responsibilities to a dedicated, centralized taskforce.** Similar to the contractor recommendation above, assigning post-approval workload ownership to a centralized taskforce within ORA would remove time-intensive administrative work from EDA's grant staff and allow individuals who are otherwise responsible for recruiting and hiring to spend more time on those initiatives.
 - **Create a position within each regional office and headquarters' OFMS that is responsible for performing data visualization and analysis.** In addition to other valuable work that these staff would perform, individuals in this role could be responsible for visualizing/analyzing the recruiting and hiring needs associated with their offices (and

reporting them to key recruiting and hiring stakeholders within OFMS). The individuals would also be able to track recruiting and hiring metrics, such as those suggested below.³²

- **Develop a Set of Recruiting Metrics**
 - **Create a set of metrics that capture the impact of EDA’s recruiting and hiring outreach strategy on a recurring weekly, monthly, and annual basis.**
 - **Additional Consideration:** The Agency can consider capturing some of the industry best practice recruiting metrics listed in Figure 22, below.

Activity	Cost Implications	Close Rate
Total Open Positions	Time to Hire	Acceptance Rate
Total # of Employee Referrals	Cost per Hire	Acceptance Rate by Demographic Group
Total # of Applicants	Hire Rate	Qualified Candidate Rate
Total # of Applicants by Position		Employee Retention Rate
Diversity of Applicants		

Figure 22: Sample Recruitment and Hiring Outreach Metrics

Moving forward, enhancing recruitment and hiring strategies will be imperative for EDA as it tries to build a future-looking workforce. These strategic recruiting and hiring efforts should be managed by a singular group within OFMS to streamline continuity and reduce friction for all parties involved in the recruiting and hiring lifecycle. Establishing consistency in standards, governance and management will be important as EDA creates a scalable model for future years

³² This proposed data/visualization position is also being addressed by the EDA strategic initiative related to mission.

Training and Development

EDA is currently overhauling its training program to address known challenges tracked through a variety of resources, including FEVs, Pulse, Employee Exit Surveys, and BPR findings. Building a comprehensive training plan, however, will also be dependent on the decisions executive leadership will make regarding what roles and competencies are needed to support its long-term mission and how the Chief Training Officer (a current vacancy) will direct that change.

In the meantime, the team looked at current trainings available for new and experienced staff (including permanent employees, term employees, and contractors) and held workshops with IPT members to discuss training opportunities that affect performance management, retention, career pathing, and succession planning. With the Agency currently undergoing a number of significant changes, including increased hiring due to ARP funding; an impending enhancement to its mission and strategic plan; and new systems, this section offers an approach for long-term training success.

Historically, EDA had limited HQ resources available to develop, direct, and manage training efforts, leading regional offices to assume responsibility to develop their staff following initial onboarding. Given the autonomy of how each office operates, EDA's training is not standardized, resulting in offices frequently leveraging peer/mentor training to bridge learning gaps. The team has identified the need to centralize training within HQ to create a cohesive, consistent environment that will provide dedicated support to all regional offices. EDA's current *de facto* "learn on the job" approach to training offers less visibility to the effectiveness of employee training than a standardized approach would offer and can hinder employee satisfaction and job readiness.

To guide its creation of a robust set of training model recommendations, the team reviewed the lifecycle of EDA's grants management employees, analyzing qualitative and quantitative data for internal trainings offered by headquarters, and external trainings coordinated by each regional office. While internal trainings are well documented, external trainings trends are less clear. In both cases, most training is provided by the Department of Commerce (particularly for mandatory training such as policy, ethics, and of legal nature) or Management Concepts, a 3rd party vendor. The specific data was used to feed this analysis can be found in the associated Workforce Plan Appendix section.

The following section will provide a summary of the challenges EDA has experienced under its current training and development paradigm:

Current-State Pain Points

The team's review revealed a variety of pain points which can broadly be categorized into the following themes:

- 1. Standardized, role-specific training (including term hires)**
 - IPT members shared that information can be found in a variety of ways but that it's up to the employee to navigate various sources to learn what they need to know at their respective offices (HQ and Regional)
- 2. Bandwidth for peer-to-peer training administration among EDA's tenured regional office staff**
 - This resonated with many audiences through interviews. While new hires appreciate the hands-on experience and connectedness to a tenured employee, increased workload has strained how existing personnel balance their grant workloads with the demands

associated with training new hires in their offices. This resonated with many audiences through interviews.

3. Standardized grants management training processes

- Regional offices will use the CLC system to find training specific to grants management and in some cases refer to older manuals, which were provided years ago. These training are void of process steps or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

4. Cross-office training standards

- Some IPT members were meeting each other for the first-time during initiative information sessions, despite having the same roles. They expressed the need for more collaboration and office sharing, particularly within “like roles”.

5. Training support for EDA’s contractors

- Contractors have to pay for their own training as stated, so they oftentimes resort to only leveraging on-the-job training

6. Career growth within EDA

- Employee data (including exit surveys) highlight that employees do not have the tools, support, or roadmap guidance to further their careers. While there are some exceptions to this pain point, it resonated across the IPT.

7. Supervisor/manager development

- Widely acknowledged, a concerted efforts to arm supervisors and managers with the tools they need to be effective leaders is needed. To date, there are limited trainings to upskill current staff for supervisory or management positions

8. Data & Tools

- Addressed more fully under a different initiative, this pain point was underscored by Civil Engineers during IPT

To further understand these points, the next section recaps the training method and programming offered to new employees at EDA before outlining the team’s recommendations on how EDA should continue to build upon its improvement efforts that are already underway. As noted earlier, EDA’s OFMS and regional offices share responsibility to train grants management staff. The result of this shared responsibility is that lines of responsibilities are often unclear. With this in mind, the team made two key distinctions related to EDA’s training – *onboarding training* for new hires includes engagement with OFMS and RO Admin Directors; however, *skills-based training* has been uniquely provided by each regional office based on a need-based basis.

New Hires

New employees, whether permanent or term, encounter their first formal training engagement through the Department of Commerce’s New Employee Orientation. Until approximately a year ago, EDA’s Administrative Team (located within OFMS) then held an EDA-specific orientation to support new hires in learning about the agency’s purpose and history with general systems training. Starting in FY21, Q1, EDA launched a *New Employee Experience* program, designed to offer more support to non-tenured employees up to their first year of service. This program offers a community and connectedness through monthly learning sessions, more HQ support through new employee mentors, and a targeted online resource housed in the Commerce Learning Center that can be leveraged for information from a staff member’s first day on the job. For contractors, no formal onboarding exists due to a requirement that contractors have to pay out of pocket (although they are invited to attend), so all of their training must

be undertaken on-the-job. This practice can hinder a contractor's ability to effectively onboard due to the pace of the real-world environment in which they are placed and the time management skills required of staff to ensure they receive what is needed to perform their duties. Once transitioned to HQ and field offices, new hires encounter a variety of training practices and procedures that are often program- or regional-office specific.

Onboarding

Self-Paced Department of Commerce Training Modules

The most common standardized trainings that exist for EDA staff members are electronic program offerings administered from the Department of Commerce level. Broadly, they can be bucketed into two categories – those that relate to grant operations (e.g., training related to disaster funding), and those that are administrative in nature (e.g., training related to government property accountability standards). Of the training that is offered, far more relates to administrative functions than to grant operations. The operations training that *are* offered do not appear to be frequently taken. From a higher-level perspective, these DOC opportunities do not appear to be well utilized in general.

Skills-Based Training

Each regional office has a significant training budget for staff to use for training resources. Through a partnership with Management Concepts (a 3rd party vendor), employees receive formal Grants training along with other courses to further their skills. This effort is organized and supported by Administrative Directors and dependent upon need and budget. Trainings are generally completed by staff if mandatory or highly encouraged. Field offices vary in the attention placed on training. In some offices, for example, a large emphasis is placed on training, as shown by examples such as the creation of training schedules that include DOC trainings, presentations on relevant topics given internally and even online sources such as YouTube. In other cases, leadership focuses more on giving staff the foundational resources they need to perform their roles. On the extreme end, some offices have no training plan at all and default instead to peer-to-peer learning.

Accounting for the types of training delivered varies among offices, given the autonomous environment that exists. As noted by some offices, tracking can be tied to the SF 182 denotation for payout, which serves as the primary way to account for who has participated.

While EDA does not currently have a formal skills-based training curriculum, a “Grants Management Rollout” training exercise is in effect. This plan is designed to iteratively develop live synchronous and self-paced e-learning. Similar to a “train the trainers” concept, this program has been used in some offices during the rollout of the new grants’ manual trainings. Two grants management staff (appointed by RDs) and the regional counsel (as directed by OCC) are tagged “experts” in the grants manual rollout training within their office. The training team then provides the cohort members with relevant training materials for rollout to their teams.

Beyond this, however, the skills-based training that EDA *does offer* is generally provided on an ad hoc, as-needed basis and is typically peer-to-peer in nature. This training typically centers around one of two items: the execution of individual work tasks (typically taught in a mentor/mentee format); or the dissemination of information regarding EDA policy guideline updates (typically delivered via staff announcements or ‘All Hands’ to regional office supervisors who then interpret and disseminate it to relevant staff). Neither of these touch on proficiency attainment as it relates to individual competencies (such as those detailed in the newly created competency model, which is described in the section of this

document called “Competencies”). A recurring call, “The EDR Community of Practice” is an example of a standing meeting that was recently created for regional office EDRs to share best practices and serves as a way to engage and pick up tips to hone skills.

Technology and Data Training

Beyond that which relates to new-hire IT onboarding, EDA does not currently have a formalized technology and data training curriculum for its employees – a gap which is notable for EDA’s current employees. Overwhelmingly, in IPT sessions and in BPR interviews, members stated the importance of creating or adopting a formalized data and systems training curriculum. The Grants Management system which is antiquated, is the system most widely used and isn’t supported by formal training. Further, centralized tools to effectively manage data and grants doesn’t exist so as the agency adopts the new SharePoint site and agency Intranet, establishing formal training strategy that would allow EDA’s offices to effectively track and protect grant information in an accessible manner is needed.³³ Both data and systems will be evaluated through parallel initiatives.

Leadership Development

To address gaps noted in Pulse, BPR, IPT, and FEVs data, EDA developed a Leadership Development Program (LDP).³⁴ The program is designed to prepare managers, supervisors, and staff to build skills as aligned with OPM’s Leadership Competencies. FY 22 focuses on four themes in order to equip staff to support several organizational change initiatives and congressional mandates that have driven EDA’s surge in training and hiring efforts. This effort aims to expand EDA’s portfolio of leadership development services such that the Agency provides a cohesive, integrated and user-driven set of support options to its staff.

As a specific example, “What is an EDA Manager” is being designed by OFMS to answer foundational questions about the role of manager at EDA. It aligns heavily with OPM to ensure standards and compliance but is customized to fit EDA’s culture and needs. Comprised of key areas themes such as: Managers as Change Agents, Public Servants, Coaches, Leaders, Technical Experts and Connectors, the program is supported by a toolbox of resources to accompany a yearlong development journey for staff it is being used to help build out the LDP program.

Program development was supported by evaluation data gathered in the FY21 Leadership Development Program implemented by an external vendor, staff exit surveys, new employee surveys, and interviews with every supervisor at the GS 14-15 and SES levels (and a few non-supervisors who have participated in relevant leadership trainings) and will address several areas to enhance management skills to enhance individual learning styles. The program will include OPM competencies, newly defined EDA competencies and role definitions as they are refined and adopted. As employees progress through their careers, emphasis on non-technical skills sets will be a critical part of this curriculum. Economic Development, which is another area that has not been of focus, will require solid programming to serve as a foundation for all personnel but those in supervisory and management positions.

³³ Note that there is significant overlap between this topic and EDA’s Data Strategy strategic initiative.

³⁴ Although not directly related to EDA’s current state training offerings, the team suggests that EDA include such as succession planning strategies, performance management guidelines, individual performance plans, and 360 training principles into its LDP (in conjunction with any new tools/platforms designed to improve accessibility to role, competency, and grants management information).

Recommendations for Consideration

Given the enormity of change planned across the Agency (e.g., a new grants management system, the continued roll-out of the Agency's Salesforce platform, an Intranet site, substantial hiring, and structural organizational changes), effective training and development delivery will depend upon the Agency's ability to lead a concerted effort to collaborate across systems, partners, and stakeholders at both the HQ and regional office level. With these changes, as well as EDA's recent history of subpar FEV training scores in mind, the team suggests that EDA leverage a holistic, centralized training strategy to help calibrate and contextualize future improvements to its training and development offerings.

Training Framework

In order to build a lasting training and development program, EDA should consider 3 factors when identifying the Agency's needs and priorities. This framework will ensure alignment before program development begins.

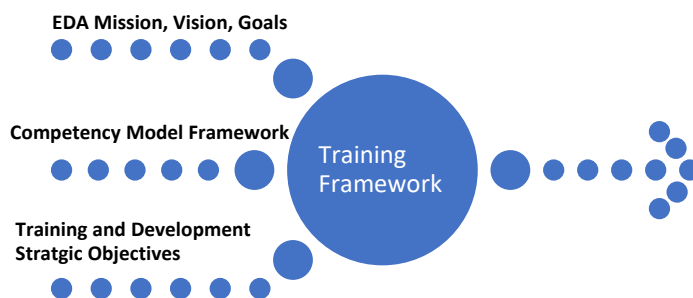


Figure 23 – Training Framework

Agency Goals

EDA leadership's strategic goals must sit at the center of its training and development framework. EDA's 2021-2022 Strategic Plan has identified five goals related to workforce strategy that should be considered during the construction of the Agency's training and development curricula and, as such, its training framework:

- Excel at the Customer-Centric Delivery of Economic Development Programs
- Effectively Anticipate, Respond to, and Implement Change
- Use Data and Evidence to Strengthen the Impact of EDA Programs
- Expand the Reach and Impact of EDA's Work to Catalyze Economic Development
- Foster an Exceptional Workplace that Attracts, Develops and Retains a Talented Workforce

Two objectives related to these goals, also included as part of the Agency's 2021-2022 Strategic Plan, should also be considered:

- Develop an agile, capable, and "right-sized" workforce
- Help employees meet performance and professional goals

Competency Model Framework

Extensive focus was given to identifying competencies needed for the grants management workforce by outlining functions within each facet of the grants management life cycle. These competencies comprised of soft and hard skills for each of the 5 core functions and auxiliary functions, of which both should be taken into account when building the training framework. (More information can be found in

the section of this plan titled “Competency Needs.”) This model should be developed and used as the basis for hiring, training and succession planning at EDA. By developing a framework based on the employee lifecycle, training would ensure that specific focus is targeted key points in an employee’s journey. For example, competencies should vary from a new hire to tenured personnel, tying to performance management evaluation, ensuring that employees are ready for the next level in their career growth (succession planning).

The team suggests 3 categories of competencies when developing the framework: 1) Functional, 2) Foundational, and 3) Leadership. This section will outline an approach for these themes to enable a path to build the plan.

To begin, separating new employees from tenured personnel to understand how competencies will evolve as staff members gain more experience in their role is a best practice. Next, as described on page 22-23 within the “Competency Needs” section, competencies for each group will need to be understood and approved. This may happen through the proficiency assessment being recommended, or through focus groups, to determine, by role and grade level, what KSAs are most critical within new and tenured staff. Once approved by the executive leadership, training can be developed by roles within each category.

The training team has already begun its focus on the Leadership Development Program, which is a great start. Once roles are defined, accepted and approved by the executive team, building a competency curriculum around each leadership position in the regional offices can be further defined by functional and foundational competencies (as the overall competency glossary suggests). Performance metrics can be assigned based on GS level, placing the proper weight on each competency the Agency wants to focus on. Ultimately, this strategy can stretch across HQ leadership roles as well once approved.

Once all three groups have identified relevant competencies, the training department will need to create a mechanism to capture changes in roles in the future. It is recommended that refreshing competencies and subsequent training should occur formally every few years based on strategic and agency-wide changes.

Training and Development Strategic Objectives

Training and development strategic objectives should take into consideration the collaborative efforts of stakeholders within executive leadership, regional office leadership and the OFMS training liaisons. This includes making key decisions as to what training will be mandated for which staff members and what roles key training stakeholders (e.g., Area/Admin Directors) will play in each part of future training efforts.

Post-Framework Considerations

Following the adoption of this training framework, EDA can consider the following:

- **Conduct a formal training needs assessment of staff to understand the current state of personnel**
 - This recommendation, which would ideally be performed by grants management leadership (e.g: RD/HQ Leadership/ADs), will provide insight into aggregate training gaps that currently exist and highlight opportunities that can be leveraged to help EDA meet its organizational goals. Such a needs assessment will be critical in identifying individual training needs as well as a level of granular insight that will be needed to create EDA’s desired continuous learning environment. In conjunction with the proficiency assessment

and competency assessment, this can inform training exactly how to establish programming for new hires, tenured and leadership personnel. (See “Competency Needs.”)

- **Conduct an audit of all training materials to determine efficacy and accuracy**
 - This would include internal and external coursework and provide an understanding of current training practices, gaps and opportunities.
- **Align training resources across offices to maximize opportunities**
 - Resources can be aligned to maximize learning and development opportunities for all EDA employees through the targeted use of marketing and communications strategies.
- **Standardize all processes for grants management**
 - Create grants management Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that are documented. This will limit process variation across locations. (This may include grants management, audits, and de-obligations to start).
 - This may require a task force comprised of each regional office to understand best practices.
- **Consider the use of beta testers**
 - Field representatives can provide critical feedback on in-development training modules when they are allowed to participate in the training creation and review process.
- **Consider augmenting OFMS training resources by adding Grants Management Training Ambassadors**
 - Each regional office can identify one person (or a set of rotating individuals) to help collect and share best practices to ensure training modules address each location’s uniqueness. Gathering information quickly can prove to be beneficial given tight timelines to deploy materials such as the LPD program in development. Specific roles ambassadors can fill include those related to data, systems, process, environmental, and operational best practices.
- **Align new training requirements with new processes, tools, systems**
 - EDA’s OFMS human resources staff can promote further alignment by ensuring that the agency’s training requirement/framework is consistently applied to new processes, tools, systems (particularly important given the rapid amount of change currently occurring at EDA). All systems deployment with supported training (new intranet, SharePoint, grants management and others) will require careful consideration in deployment and overall adoption. Iterative modules and hands on exercises may be required.
- **Include term employees and contractors in training planning for internal and external modules**
 - Formalize the use of trainings that will aid in faster employee ramp times, removing pressure on EDA’s tenured permanent employees to train term employees/contractors on the job.
- **Develop Career Pathing Curricula**
 - Professional development is a critical employee satisfaction driver. Identify and create a roadmap for all levels and positions to help retain talent and prepare for succession planning. Outline mandatory and non-mandatory courses, providing a shared partnership with staff. Create checkpoints and summary reports so progress is tracked. Examples

include progressing within levels but also moving from one role to *another* (e.g: EDS to Analyst, EDR to Area Director).

- **Link to Performance Management**
 - As mentioned in the Performance Management section, in conjunction with leadership, create requirements that tie to annual performance. This may be focused heavily on critical training coursework initially such as roles, competencies, economic development, systems and tools completion. (Also consider an “end of course” assessment grading step to validate understanding of KSAs).
- **Create a learning culture**
 - Create a learning culture that empowers employees to self-manage their individual professional development plans in a manner that supports career growth that is beneficial to EDA. Utilizing the forthcoming EDA intranet can help codify this culture by increasing awareness of best practices and resources. Additionally, continued coaching and development through the LDP curricula can emphasize the importance of a learning culture the grants management leadership support and encourages.
- **Develop Individual Performance Plans to promote development opportunities**
 - Encourage regional office leadership to develop these by working with HQ human resources (based on the outcome of the competency and proficiency assessment discussed in this document’s “Competency” section). Regional office leadership in conjunction with OFMS can execute on FY22 plans to develop goals for all grants management employees and begin putting in motion actions to improve results.
- **Create a mentoring and learning environment**
 - Build a coaching, learning and development environment with curricula and programs that address the learning needs of EDA grants management. This can be an extension of the assessment and competency modeling outputs to inform immediate and ongoing educational opportunities.
- **Build awareness to increase utilization of development opportunities**
 - Increase EDA-wide awareness of learning and development opportunities for all employees through a marketing and communication strategy, including using the Intranet as a centralized information resources for sharing opportunities.
- **Leverage DOC’s Learning Management Center as the grants management Learning Management System of choice or look to develop a system specific for in house training and development**
 - Identify how to incorporate field specific training for one cohesive repository of resources
 - Review DOC’s Learning Center for underutilized training opportunities
- **Encourage data-driven decision making to promote increased training efficacy**
 - Develop data dashboards that will pull information from the Learning Management System classes and surveys, and webpage traffic. Identify any dependencies between existing systems (MicroStrategy and/or SharePoint).
- **Include ways to measure training effectiveness**
 - Continue formal processes to capture and understand qualitative and quantitative performance indicators as they relate to relevant all training curricula. Some example

methods of data capture include post-training quizzes, employee surveys, participant case studies, official certifications, and one-on-one discussions. Data captured from these tools can provide insight into factors such as recipient satisfaction, pre- and post-training performance results, and overall improvement in EDA's grants management capabilities. As mentioned in the Performance Management section, training effectiveness should be aligned to "Performance and Pay", one of the 5 EDA recommended performance elements.

Performance Management

Current State

The Grants Management workforce is highly passionate about their work as shown in FEVs and satisfaction reports. Even as workload has significantly increased due to spikes in funding appropriations, employees across regions work hard to do what it takes to process and award grants on time and with high quality. In some cases, staff have mentioned that they are handling workload of more than 5 times normal volumes during spikes (according to BPR findings), yet the staff remains committed to getting the job done to serve its customers. This has been affirmed through IPT sessions, too, during which it was shared that grants staff tend to place focus on the accomplishment of the grant work itself, and not explicitly on how each staff is measured against performance objectives to meet office or organization's goals.

As a byproduct, organizational, and therefore individual, success is largely measured by total grants dollars coming in and being awarded prior to the end of the fiscal year and not much more. The existence of clear and concise individual expectations with milestones and measurements varies significantly and is often lacking. The result is a fragmented approach to developing individuals to help them meet their professional goals while attaining the larger organizational mission. Individual performance plans or evaluation models, such as 360 reviews, are generally not in place as a consistent practice across the organization's grant management staff.

With EDA's increase in staff and the influx of newer personnel, there is a growing need to address managing and coaching using a universal Performance Management model. IPT members have expressed the desire to learn and develop not only in their current role, but other roles of interest too, to become more well-rounded and potentially positioned for other opportunities within the agency. The current performance management system is currently not acting as an enabler of these goals. New staff are feeling the effects as well. As mentioned in previous sections, onboarding for term employees is currently being handled 'on the job', exposing risk to satisfaction levels and turnover due to the lack of clear guidance and variability based on who the new employee is being paired with. While some new staff mentioned their mentor/peer assignment was positive with in depth hands-on coaching and development, others noted not having the same experience, as the process is driven by workload and availability of the mentor/peer. Wanting a roadmap to achieve this goal had been made clear, and for those members who are in a supervisor capacity, they wanted a systematic way to gauge and manage performance along with the ability to provide incentives to encourage and reward good work. The need to retain talent is also of growing concern, specifically due to the elongated hiring process overall, but also due to specialty roles that are particularly unique and more difficult to backfill such as the Civil Engineer and higher GS level positions.

In the 2020 FEV survey, EDA ranks 234 out of 406 federal subcomponents regarding rewards and recognition. (See Figure 24, below.) This ranking is largely due to the system and budgetary constraints across offices, which limits overall performance management objectives being supported. Each office currently has \$2500/annually, and through an antiquated system, oftentimes using rewards and recognition as a management tool is hampered. To combat that, the offices use both structured and unstructured incentives and rewards that may leverage newsletters and other sources to acknowledge

good work. In both cases, the need to recognize good work quickly is an overarching theme by staff. (Specific ways staff handles rewards are below).

In lieu of a formal Performance Management model in place, the team analyzed recently updated OPM performance guidelines, rewards and recognition pain points (shown below), and reviewed current practices to establish a set of recommendations to standardize and evaluate performance.

Current State Rewards and Recognition Pain Points

Best Places to Work’s “Recognition” FEVs category score, marked by a red box in the visual below, measures the extent to which employees feel they are rewarded and promoted in a fair and timely manner for their performance and innovative contributions to their workplaces. EDA’s Recognition scores reflect a common frustration held by EDA’s managers and employees that strong performance is not appropriately measured, managed, and rewarded by the Agency. In addition, employees feel managers do not address deficient performance. Managers lack the tools, training, and guidance to effectively manage both poor and strong performance.

“Best Places to Work” Category	2020 Agency Rank	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Effective Leadership: Senior Leaders	130 of 410	41.5	53.2	59.8	63.2	65.8
Innovation	134 of 411	64.3	70.6	70.9	72.5	74.9
Effective Leadership	159 of 410	51.3	61	65.1	68	69.5
Effective Leadership: Empowerment	162 of 410	48.3	57.2	59.1	63.5	64.3
Pay	173 of 407	70.7	76.5	75.5	78.6	73.2
Teamwork	181 of 407	61.3	71.6	74.4	75.6	76.9
Employee Skills—Mission Match	205 of 411	75.5	78.7	80.6	79.4	78.7
Recognition	234 of 406	45.6	52.1	55	54.1	66.0
Effective Leadership: Supervisors	245 of 410	63.8	72.7	75.1	75.8	80.8
Work-Life Balance	382 of 411	58.4	62.2	64.2	63	68.2
Effective Leadership: Fairness	N/A	48.8	56.7	61.9	66.5	N/A
Training and Development	N/A	60	65.9	66.9	65.7	N/A
Strategic Management	N/A	52.9	58	65.2	65.7	N/A
Support for Diversity	N/A	52.3	59.8	64.6	65.2	N/A

Scoring quartile legend compared to other Government agencies.

Lower Quartile (0-25%)	Below Median (25–50%)	Above Median (50–75%)	Upper Quartile (75–100%)
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Figure 24: EDA’s “Best Places to Work” FEVS Workforce Category scores, displayed in descending order based on 2020 ranks³⁵

Beyond that which is reflected by the above FEVs data, team research revealed three additional rewards and recognition pain point themes:

- **Only 66% of employees believe that EDA’s rewards and recognition programs are satisfactory**
- **Rewards and Recognition possibilities are not well known or understood among EDA managers or line staff**

³⁵ Workforce category scores are calculated by averaging the percentage of positive responses to FEVS questions across many aspects of the employee experience. Note that FEVS was modified between 2019 and 2020 to account for additional COVID-19 related questions, so individual category scores should not be compared between 2020 and prior years.

- **EDA’s rewards and recognition program is critical in helping EDA meet its business objectives, but there are notable deficiencies in its processes** (e.g., difficulty of award acceptance/submittal, uncertain processing timelines, etc.)

Current State Practices

A varying set of practices exist across offices to manage performance, however annual reviews are used to formally measure and evaluate employees across all of EDA, which serves as the anchor for consistent review and evaluation of staff work. For new hires, there are now focused efforts on the first six months of employment to build the needed foundation for success through the *New Hire Experience Program* (found also in the Training and Development section). For months 7-12, more direct attention on performance is in place, with focus on finalizing an individual’s Learning Plan while gaining access to practical on-the-job training.

In an effort to improve employee satisfaction on the job, EDA has leveraged DOC recognition programs and are keenly focused on new hires as noted below:

- **Regional offices have created recurring recognition programs to highlight the successes of employees.** Each office handles these events uniquely, however, and they provide supervisors and managers with the opportunity to build teamwork and unity through spotlight awards. This practice resonates with employees, and according to IPT feedback, keeping this program is widely encouraged. Gift cards, rotating trophies, handwritten notes, care packages, and ‘virtual roses’ are used by regional offices to promote a job well done. One office has created a “Flying Pig” trophy that rotates monthly.
- **Department of Commerce’s Annual Bronze Award Ceremony is a staple event within EDA that celebrates outstanding accomplishments that took place across the Agency each year.** Higher profile than EDA’s other award programs, the Bronze Award Ceremony provides employees with an opportunity to learn more about the Agency’s priorities and to be recognized by peers and colleagues across the Agency. Although this program is coordinated with (and run through) the Department of Commerce, Bronze Awards do not require Commerce-level concurrence and are thus more easily managed and distributed by EDA leadership than Gold and Silver Awards.
- **The New Employee Experience Program was implemented by OFMS HQ training to provide new employees with increased support during their first year of employment.** Automatically enrolled, new hires receive video welcome letters from EDA leadership and are placed in a supportive environment to help them navigate life at EDA, using the *New Employee Experience Program Teams Collaboration Site*. This enables critical information to be found quickly and allows targeted support by OFMS during the most critical time of job onboarding. Performance Milestones are established throughout their first year of employment.

Recommendations for Consideration

EDA can create a systematic, goals-based performance management strategy that leverages existing best practices for rewards and recognition as they exist in regional offices. To do so, the performance management cycle – planning, monitoring, developing, rating, and rewarding – must be universally understood and embraced by grants management leadership stakeholders. Ideally, EDA’s performance management strategy will be one in which:

- Goals are set and work is planned routinely
- Progress toward those goals is measured and employees receive regular constructive feedback
- High standards are set, but care is also taken to develop the skills needed to reach them

- Formal and informal rewards are used to recognize the behavior and results that accomplish the mission

Roadmap

In working to improve its performance management offerings, EDA can adopt the updated July 2021 OPM Performance Management Guidelines, which include new and updated language on critical elements that have been designed to ensure equity and fairness in federal performance management plans. The revised critical elements are (see Appendix E for full descriptions):

- **The Customer Service critical element for all General Schedule (GS) employees**, which has been framed to promote mutual understanding between federal employees and their customers.
- **The Leadership/Management critical element for all GS supervisors**, which has been framed to promote fairness and timeliness in performance management activities.

Following the adoption of those critical elements, EDA can create a framework called “EDA’s 5 Key Performance Elements” using OPM’s guidelines that would enable more meaningful and frequent engagement. These elements would include 1) Data from multiple sources, 2) Employee Development, 3) Performance & Pay, 4) Enable Better Performance, 5) Coaching and Mentoring.

1. Data from Multiple Sources

- **Codify data across grants management** that align to the Agency’s goals and objectives and are currently being measured by the organization.

2. Employee Development

- **Design individual development plans (IDPs) in line with annual performance reviews** to map out work goals that can support career advancement (through activities such as attendance at internal and external training programs and assignment of stretch responsibilities).
 - **Considerations:**
 - HQ HR should lead this effort to establish continuity and consistency across regional offices.
 - Review any existing plans used across locations to identify best practices if a cohesive standard document is not being used.
- **Develop and implement a 360 Review Process to allow for a more balanced review process.** This will enable employees to evaluate themselves and their supervisors, gaining more confidence in the process while collecting important skills needed to succeed in their careers. The combination of assessments and coaching empowers employees to understand their strengths and areas for improvement, while simultaneously developing actionable plans to apply what they have learned about themselves.
 - **Considerations:**
 - EDA can select and administer a formal 360-assessment (such as *The Leadership Circle Profile*), which will then be followed by a debrief session to set improvement goals and coaching sessions to help achieve them.
 - This can be beta tested to validate effectiveness as a part of the ongoing annual review period.
- **Regional leaders (Regional Directors, Area/Admin Directors) can monitor and contribute to the creation of the OFMS Leadership Development Program (LDP).** Ensure performance expectations and goals for groups and individuals are set and understood by the intended audience. Contribute ideas for diverse developmental opportunities that would introduce new skills or higher levels of responsibility.

- **Considerations:** Guided by the training department, develop a formal process for collecting, documenting, and storing development opportunities for the supervisor and manager toolkit.
- A system to solicit and gather material is needed. Identify a HQ staff member to own and govern process.
- **Coach supervisors in engaging marginal performers proactively in the performance management process.** When supervisors avoid dealing with marginal performers, they are really avoiding difficult conversations.
 - **Considerations:** OFMS can own, develop, and provide a template for supervisors to engage marginal performers that emphasize:
 - clear communication in a two-way conversation around expectations and how they are not being met.
 - frequent, positive, and constructive feedback to establish what is being done well and what needs improvement.
 - increased supervision to understand that obstacle the employee faces and help them overcome.
 - mentoring for the marginal performer to provide a model of desired performance; and
 - training for skills that might be contributing to marginal performance.
 - Include and cross reference to LPD toolkit in development to ensure critical components are captured.

3. Performance & Pay

- **Strive to make the “rewards and recognition” process more visible and transparent.** Government constraints may not allow the process to be streamlined, but an open process where supervisor, reward recipient (employee or team), and HR are regularly informed of the status of the process would help add “good faith” to the process and overcome delays.
 - **Considerations:** EDA can also promote “on-the-spot” and annual “rewards and recognition” opportunities and provide streamlined education for busy supervisors in how to facilitate the process.
 - EDA’s internal SharePoint provides a centralized location for this information; [OPM guidance on awards](#) should be housed and even summarized by HR in a dedicated folder on the EDA SharePoint site.
 - This convenience would make the “rewards and recognition” process more accessible, and therefore more impactful, at any point throughout the year. Better access and oversight will also trigger more confidence to increase use, particularly with on-the-spot recognition programs held in monthly meetings. These non OEY rewards can be levers to increased production and team unity.

4. Enable Better Performance

- For EDA individual performance plans, it is suggested to revisit DOC Critical Elements, Activities, and Evaluation Criteria (especially the revised Customer Service and Leadership/Management versions) and the role definition recommendations presented earlier in the Workforce Plan to promote alignment.
 - **Considerations:**

- Modified performance plan requirements incorporate new role-specific skillsets, with guidance on how to best determine when staff are ready to advance in their careers.
 - EDA HQ and executive leadership members should review and update performance standards and ratings/metrics to comply with OPM's 5-point scale.
- **Dependency:** Determine the frequency that performance ratings/metrics and standards should be reviewed. It is recommended that this be done annually.
- **Performance standards:** According to OPM, a performance standard is a "management-approved expression of the performance threshold(s), requirement(s), or expectation(s) that must be met to be appraised at a particular level of performance." In other words, how well employees must perform in their jobs. The standard could therefore take the form of quality (how well the work is done), quantity (how many tasks are accomplished), timing (accomplished by a certain time or date), or cost (done within allocated budget). They should be challenging, fair, and applicable for the position given the updated role definitions and critical elements criteria.
 - **Considerations:**
 - Given regional variations of roles, the overall seniority (applying the GS scale) of EDA's grants management employees, and the rise in new employees, consider leveraging a Management by Objectives (MBO) approach. This suggests clearly defining objectives that are agreed to by both management and employees. This would consider the nuances of location, role, and years of service when determining standards. Though the approach would add complexity, EDA may be small enough to manage the trade-off of administrative burden for more fully-engaged and incentivized employees, resulting in higher productivity.
 - In practice, MBO can be approached in five steps:
 - Determine or revise organizational objectives at the EDA level.
 - Translate the organizational objectives to employees via SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) goals (see description below).
 - Share organizational objectives with employees and empower them to set individual objectives that help achieve the organizational objectives. With supervisor facilitation, this step accounts for regional and tenure differences and variances and therefore helps the objectives resonate more meaningfully with each employee.
 - Monitor the progress of meeting objectives in order for employees and managers to determine how well they are met.
 - Evaluate and reward employee progress, including honest feedback on what was achieved and not achieved for each employee.

- **Performance ratings:** Comply with OPM’s 5-point performance rating scale³⁶ which would remove misleading subjectivity, creates clear determinations, and identifies high performers
 - **Considerations:**
 - Review OPM scale at the executive leadership level with regional office RD’s to discuss and review the 5-point scale for understanding and acceptance.
 - Develop training for all supervisors and grants management leadership personnel – including in the LDP toolkit.

5. Coaching and Mentoring

- a. Leverage the in-development curricula for Grants Leadership Pathways. This should include coaching poor performers, which was identified in survey data and BPR findings.

The team suggests a review of the recommendations with HQ leadership, Admin and Regional Directors and other key stakeholders to determine priorities. Developing a timeline for EDA that distinguishes the quick wins from the long-term initiatives will create a baseline for layered strategies.

³⁶ OPMS Performance Rating Scale is from 1-5 (1=unacceptable performance, 2=Did not meet standard, 3=Met standard which fulfills standard successfully, 4=Exceeded standard, 5=highest level of performance)

Succession Planning & Supervisor Development

Current State

Recognizing the need to establish a formal succession plan focused on key grants management roles, the team met to discuss trends and pain points while leveraging HQ training leaders to align on the following definitions and scope for planning:

Succession planning is the process of identifying and developing a diverse pool of highly capable, high-performing, and results-oriented leaders who can replace current leaders when they depart. The process involves building a leadership pipeline or talent pool of employees prepared to assume roles of greater responsibility when they become available. A succession policy for specific EDA leadership positions that require both leadership and grants management competencies – a specific and unique blend – will enhance mission accomplishment and enable agile continuity of mission-critical operations and knowledge transfer when positions are vacated by incumbent leaders.

A **candidate development pool** is a diverse, inclusive pool of high-potential employees identified to meet competency targets for grants management succession planning. Employees may either be selected or self-nominate to the pool based on meeting established criteria. At a minimum, candidate development pools engage aspiring leaders and allow for data-driven decision-making among HR and target position incumbents. Succession Plans adhere to merit principles and avoid preselection of employees to target positions.

A formal succession plan framework was developed leveraging industry best practices, OPM guidelines, and current ‘in development’ leadership development programming for all EDA leaders, of which grants management leaders and supervisors are included.

To date, a formal, holistic succession program for grants management planning and oversight does not exist at EDA. As a result, EDA has gaps that relate to a lack of standardized succession planning protocols inclusive of deep candidate pools and a lack of a cohesive knowledge management transfer strategy. The need to solve for these gaps, particularly within the supervisor pool, is becoming increasingly salient as a significant portion EDA’s permanent employees begin to reach retirement eligibility and newer hires move to backfill their roles.

An analysis of retirement data shows that nearly 40% of EDA’s permanent employees (across all offices) will be retirement eligible by the end of 2026:

Permanent Employee Retirement Eligibility Outlook (3/2021)	<i>EoY 2021</i>	23%
	<i>EoY 2026</i>	38%
	<i>EoY 2031</i>	54%

Figure 25: EDA Permanent Employee Retirement Eligibility Outlook (As of March 2021)

In EDA’s regional offices, the supervisor role most at risk of significant institutional knowledge loss due to retirement within the next five years is that of the Regional Director. The management teams of the Atlanta and Philadelphia Regional Offices are also notably eligible for retirement.

	ATRO	AURO	CRO	DRO	PRO	SRO	Total Eligibility (by position)
Regional Director	1/1	1/1	0/1	0/1	1/1	0/0	66%
Area Director	1/1	0/2	0/1	1/1	1/2	0/2	33%
Admin Director	1/1	0/1	0/1	0/1	1/1	0/1	33%
Total Eligibility (by office)	100%	25%	0%	33%	75%	0%	

Figure 26: EDA RO Management EOY 2026 Retirement Eligibility Outlook (As of March 2021)

Knowledge Management & Transfer

EDA's 2019-2020 Business Process Review found the Agency to have less than ideal structures for knowledge capture, distribution, and use within grants management. Today, intra-staff knowledge transfer relies heavily on ad-hoc, on-the-job mentorship by EDA's more experienced employees. Specifically, EDA has multiple, disjointed systems, which limit effective knowledge management. Additionally, EDA has little documentation for standardized knowledge management processes and procedures beyond the grants manuals and OPCS/GOL user manuals.

During the BPR, it was noted that, as a result of this spotty documentation, different regional office stakeholders had created ad hoc knowledge management documents, generally related to the grants process itself, to help transfer knowledge between staffing generations. One particular example of this documentation was the Denver Regional Office's creation of processing checklists, checklists with titles such as "Construction Processing Documents" and "OPCS Processing detail," which were designed to aid employees in performing the grants process. In some instances, groups of staff even went as far as to work across offices to establish knowledge management standards where they had not been previously put into place by the Agency. Examples of this include the RLF Grants Manual (and the associated working group that was formed to create it) or PNP's "IRC Observations/Recommendations," a document created by ORA PNP members to streamline knowledge management throughout EDA's IRC process. Regardless, however, few of these ad hoc artifacts documented during the BPR directly related to the process of succession planning itself, and, within that subset of documents, fewer still related to succession planning for supervisors.

EDA's training department is currently building a **Leadership Development Curriculum** that may play a significant role in knowledge management and transfer among all staff members. The curriculum is being designed to arm all grants management leaders with other tools to be successful by strengthening competencies, communication and coaching skills.

With regard to supervisors themselves, the team recently identified several technical and non-technical competencies associated with the ORA Regional Leadership and ORA HQ Office Directors function for EDA-specific grants management. They are being leveraged where possible in the Leadership Development Curriculum. These competencies include budget management, knowledge of federal departmental procedures, planning and prioritization, risk management, portfolio oversight, qualitative and quantitative analysis, understanding the community landscape and EDA grants needs. Additionally, soft

skills noted are inclusive of networking, coaching, customer support, negotiation, interpersonal relations and results orientation. (Note that detail on EDA's LDP can be found in this document's "Training and Development" section. Detail on competencies can be found in this document's "Competency" section.)

Recommendations for Consideration

Scope

The scope of an EDA succession plan for grants management leadership functions should address both designation of target positions and establishment of skills development pathways to form and maintain a candidate development pool of employees capable of assuming high-level leadership (supervisory and managerial) roles and responsibilities of large-scale grants portfolios.³⁷

In the context of Succession Planning and Supervisor Development, target positions are those considered essential to mission success and operational decision making. Within EDA's regional offices, target positions are:

- ORA Regional Office leadership: Regional Directors, Area Directors, Administrative Directors, Supervisory Program Managers
- ORA HQ Office Directors and Supervisory Program Managers
- OCC Regional Counsel
- OCC HQ Counsel

Development pathways are the frameworks leveraged to form, grow, and maintain an organization's target position pipeline.

These specific grants management leader development pathways should leverage human capital life cycle planning, workforce analysis, and competency assessment considerations to identify and prepare high performing/high potential employees for relevant career progression.

Recommendations

The team suggests that EDA should adopt a proper succession planning process for its ORA Regional Office leadership that avoids pre-selection, creates a diverse candidate development pool, that establishes a transparent, competitive process for staff to become a part of that pool. This will be particularly important for positions that lie at and above the GS-13 grade level, given the retirement eligibility trends. Executive leadership should define levels to participate, although GS 13-SES should automatically be considered.

Prior to finalizing its succession planning strategy, however, EDA should first complete its review of grants management role definition (discussed in the section of this document titled "Role Definition"). Finalized role definitions will lay the foundation for the knowledge transfer and mentorship processes required to best set identified succession candidates up for success. In a similar vein, finalized role definitions will also be valuable in distinguishing grants management-specific leadership expectations between staff grades. Staff at the GS-14, 15 and SES levels (individuals who are currently labeled by EDA as either part of the

³⁷ Note that EDA's Leadership Development Program recognizes that all staff at EDA are leaders in some fashion and should be working to apply the fundamental leadership competencies defined by OPM. The grade-conscious method of aligning grants management-specific leadership competency expectations with EDA staff grades, mentioned above, does *not* conflict with the idea that all EDA staff should be engaging with OPM's fundamental leadership competencies on some level. Rather, it recognizes the fact that familiarity with some grants-management specific leadership competencies is more relevant/necessary for certain grants management individuals than for others. The team encourages EDA's human resources staff to consider these two points as complementary and to align them where possible.

“organization’s strategic leadership” or as “supervisors”) should be actively applying the acquired leadership and functional competencies addressed above to their current work. At the GS-12 and 13 levels, incumbents should be broadening their experience by gaining familiarity with these leadership competencies through education, experience, and training. At GS-11 and below, incumbents should be gaining functional experience and skills.

Then, once role definition is clarified, EDA should consider adopting goals it can leverage to establish a formal succession plan. Leveraging OPM relevant guidelines, EDA can establish a framework for success that ensures transparency and evenness across regional offices.

From a high level, EDA should consider adopting the following goals to help build and maintain its succession plan:

- **Identify executive leaders to be involved in the planning and development**
- **Review the plan annually and update as needed**
- **Establish a leadership advisory panel to provide ongoing oversight and governance**

From a more granular perspective, to support the creation and maintenance this succession plan, EDA can consider the following:

- **Set Primary Focus on Target Positions**
 - **Identify positions that are critical to sustaining EDA grants management productivity (e.g., ORA Regional Office Leadership, ORA HQ Office Directors and Supervisory Program Managers, OCC Regional and General Counsel).**
 - **Additional Consideration:**
 - EDA headquarters staff should work in collaboration with regional office Admin Directors to define ‘critical roles’ and develop a process to collect this information. Review and discuss strategic workforce meetings to develop strategies to address current needs.
 - **Dependencies:**
 - Process ownership by HQ human resources would require a dedicated resource
 - Automated email messaging to manage consistent communication flow would be ideal. However, it would require IT engagement and assistance.
 - **Create Succession Profiles to be used for succession planning strategies.** The purpose of collecting this data will be used for quick reference guides outlining the criteria to fill positions by expected departures. This data can be used to guide strategic workforce planning discussions held with each regional office. (See sample succession profile form in Appendix F):
 - **Additional Consideration:**
 - Develop a team comprised of Regional Directors, Area/Admin Directors, HQ Human Resources and SPM to review forms and identify eligible staff, ensuring that requirements are met.
 - Meet annually to review and calibrate as needed – identifying risks and align on eligible candidates by role based on above criteria
 - **Dependencies:**

- This would require the identification of an HQ resource to oversee and manage the coordination across regional offices
- **Develop a process to track and store critical work files for incumbents.** This may be inclusive of points of contact, and any required reports needed. This information can be complemented by the HR resource providing org charts, position description and a task list needed to perform the role. Any office specific information such as goals for the office can be provided by the Admin or Area Director.
- **Create a succession planning calendar.** List all the meetings/events which require participation, when they occur, and their respective locations. Include a description/purpose for each meeting/event, a sample agenda, the roles of the individuals in the meeting/event, and a description of any information/reports that must be prepared for the meeting/event. Regular agency wide communications is needed to keep Regional and ORA leadership apprised of forecasted planning.
- **Establish and award relevant training certifications for each position.** HR could award training certificates that encompass the required duties of a given position.
- **Elucidate system access requirements for each position.** List all of the systems, tools, databases required to complete the program/project/activity. Include location (websites), any training required to use the system/tool/database, and how to acquire a license/username/password for the system. Provide a brief description of the purpose of each system/tool/database.
 - **Additional Considerations:**
 - **Equipment.** Provide a list of all equipment assigned to directorate/unit and who operates the equipment
 - **Resources.** List all additional regulations, policy, instruction, guidance, publications, and other documents needed to be a success in this position
 - **Maintenance.** Electronic copies of each continuity book should be kept on the shared drive or other document sharing area for ready access. Continuity books should be reviewed and updated every six months and at a minimum annually
- **Apply and Augment Relevant Knowledge Management Strategies**
 - **Initiate knowledge management policies and procedures.** Identify knowledge/process owners in each office and their respective roles for ensuring most current knowledge is documented and accessible while encouraging work shadowing and coaching.
 - **Additional Considerations:**
 - **Assign an HQ human resources designee** to be responsible for establishing the knowledge management capture methodology to be leveraged by regional offices.
 - **Bolster EDA's LDP program** to include focus on the importance of Knowledge Sharing.
 - **Establish an Innovation Task Force** with representatives from each regional and HQ office.
 - **Include an innovation component in All Hands Meetings** to be led by the Innovation Task Force; celebrate large and small innovations

- **Identify an “Innovation Champion”** within EDA leadership
- **Highlight innovative ideas and innovation sharing** in regular communications
- **Hold regular best practices events** with commitment to disseminate and adopt best practices and lessons learned throughout the organization
- **Implement BPR recommendation 5.2** to develop a full understanding of the current and future state information flow within EDA to inform workforce (and IT planning).
- **Implement BPR recommendation 5.3** to establish lessons learned pathways across regional offices.
- **Use a Knowledge Management System.** Leverage tools such as the intranet to establish a resource repository where EDA employees can find the resources needed to perform their tasks, develop their skill set and close any knowledge gaps. Be sure to include standards for file naming and storage.
- **Optimize through continuous improvements.** Establish a working group of knowledge/process owners across officers to identify and curate content resources and best practices.
- **Create Candidate Development Pools**
 - **Establish a Candidate Development Pool for each target position.** Employees may self-nominate and be eligible for leader development opportunities based on successful performance, leadership potential, training and education qualifications and supervisor recommendation. The Pool can serve as an organizational tool for grants management supervisors, managers and senior leaders to identify, counsel, and document progress for aspiring leaders. This can also be done separately for senior positions to ensure career growth and planning is in place.
- **Leverage Pathway Frameworks**
 - **Establish Grants Leadership Pathways.** These will help EDA identify and manage development opportunities for the candidate development pool, capitalizing on the leadership development programming already in development.
 - **Develop and leverage something akin to “9 Block” grid for each target position.** A “9 Block” can be leveraged to help elucidate: whether EDA has a pipeline for each position, at what stage the pipeline needs to be filled, and how to appropriately target candidate training material.³⁸

Since EDA has no formal succession program in place today, emphasis on developing a near-term plan is essential. The team suggests a formal planning session among the HQ Executive Leadership team with regional office leadership participation to determine what can be developed and adopted focusing on high-risk positions first. A project owner for this is essential to ensure that a formal process is in place prior to another surge in staffing or attrition.

³⁸ A sample “9 Block” grid has been included in this section’s relevant Appendix F. Note that the “9 Block” grid can be modified and used as a “3 Block” grid in which only to top row of rectangles is leveraged. Regardless of the block configuration, however, note that the block grid is a tool for relevant supervisors that is designed to be confidential in nature.

EDA IT Modernization Program Overview

8/11/2022



Agenda

- **EDA IT Modernization Program (ITMP) Overview**
- **ITMP Org Chart**
- **EDA ITMP Cost Projections**
- **EDA Salesforce Grants Initiative Status**
- **Next Steps**



EDA IT Modernization Program Overview



IT Modernization Program Introduction

- **What is EDA's IT Modernization Program (ITMP)?**
 - Management of IT initiatives that will develop and roll-out new IT systems across EDA
- **Why is the ITMP important?**
 - Monitors implementation of interdependent IT initiatives to ensure successful roll-outs and user adoption of new systems
 - The ITMP aligns to EDA's Strategic Plan/Initiatives
- **What type of effort is included in ITMP Monitoring?**
 - Project with a start and end date that produces a new system or new feature set within an existing system
 - Project schedule follows a software development lifecycle (SDLC)
 - Adding new or replacement of an existing system/application
- **What is not included in EDA's ITMP?**
 - Current or new technologies related to EDA staff's day-to-day operational activities (e.g., Phones/Computers, Office 365, Teams, SharePoint)



ITMP Initiatives

- **Salesforce Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**
 - EDI, EA, DSF apps: In use since Q1 FY2020
 - RLF & TAAF apps: In use since Q3-Q4 FY2021
- **Salesforce Grants Management Initiative**
 - New Salesforce Grants System: In Progress (1st go-live Jan 23)
- **MicroStrategy and Integrated Data Environment (IDE)**
 - MicroStrategy w/ OPCS: In use since April, 2019
 - MicroStrategy Standard Reports & MicroStrategy w/ OPCS: In use since May, 2021
 - IDE Proof of Concept w/ MicroStrategy: Completed May, 2021
 - IDE Release 2 (OPCS/GOL expansion): In Progress (September 2022 Go-Live)
- **EDA Website Redesign**
 - New Website: In Progress (September 2022 Go-Live)



EDA CRM, Grants Management, & Programmatic Process Alignment

Pre-Application

Core CRM Across EDA Programs (e.g. DSF, RLF, TAAF, B2S) w/ Potential Grantees *

Economic Development Integration (EDI) CRM w/ Partners & Potential Grantees *

Office of Innovation & Entrepreneurship (OIE) Concept Proposal Process w/ Potential Grantees * (TBD)

External Affairs CRM: Congress & Media *

Planning - Award

EDA Grants Management Process



DOC eRA and BAS Financial System

Post Award – Post

EDA Construction Post-Award Process



Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) Programmatic w/ RLF Recipients (June)



Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF) Petition Process w/ TAAC Centers (June)



EDA Salesforce Applications



Legend

DOC GEMS eRA Grants System



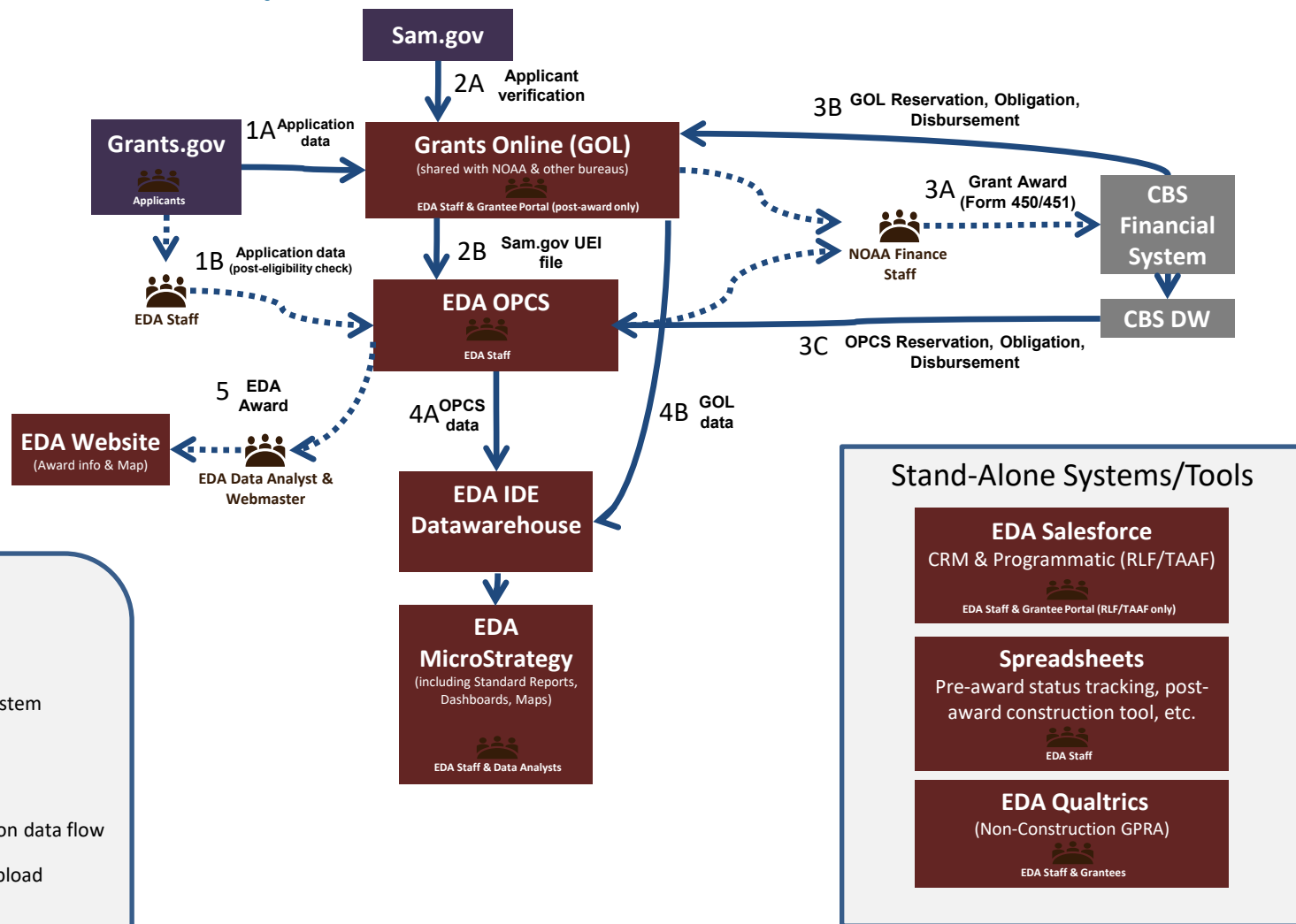
Application that will include grantee portal

* SF OIE application not fully developed and will be considered for Feb 2022 go-live

* SF application currently in production and ready to use



EDA Current State System Architecture



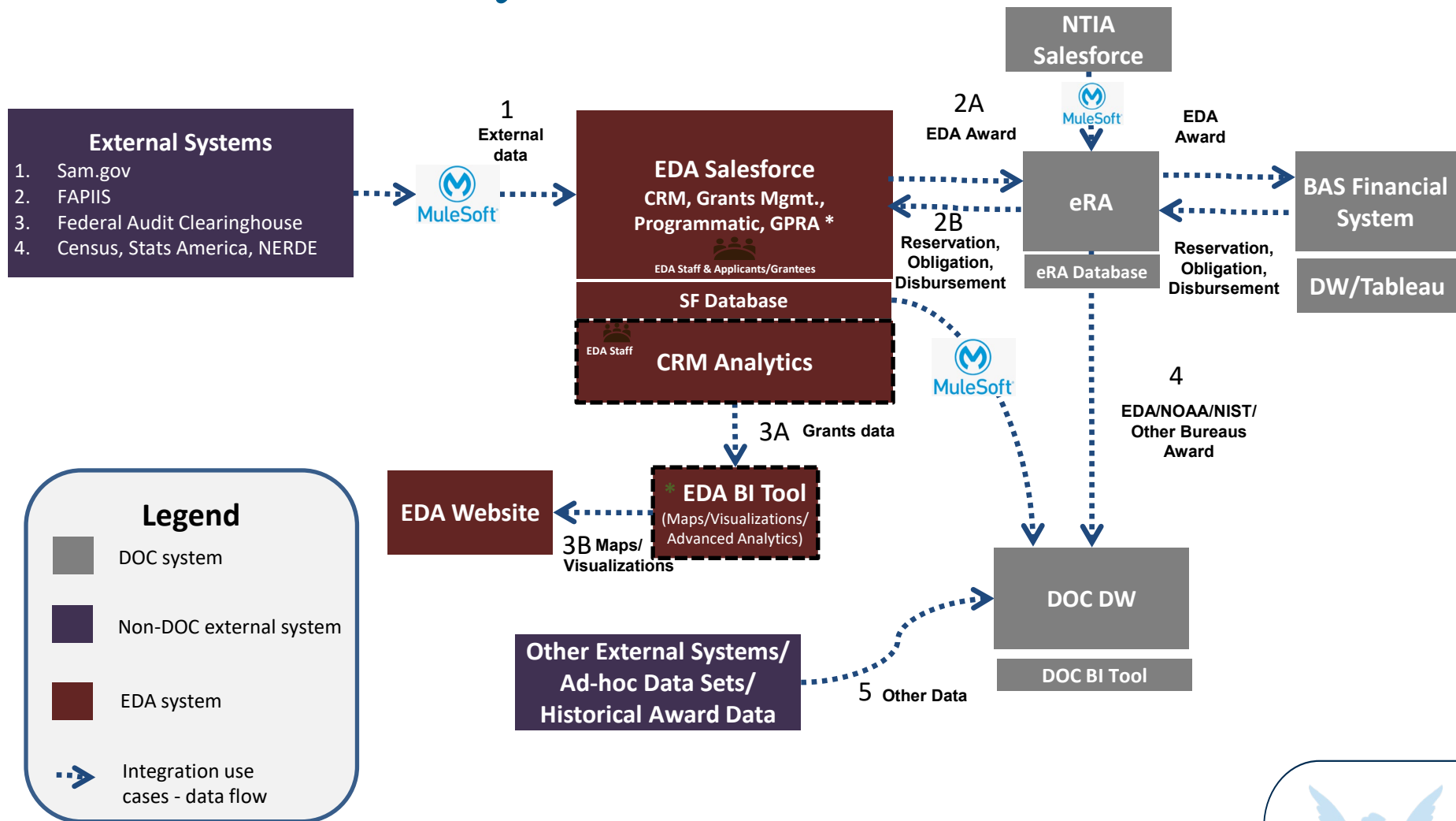
Assumptions:

- **2B** – OPCS queries (daily job) GOL to extract the full Sam.gov file to validate the UEI within OPCS.
- **4A/B** - Currently, MicroStrategy is only connected to OPCS. In the IDE Release 2 (targeted Aug 22), OPCS and GOL data will be available within MicroStrategy (as depicted in graphic above). A query is used within the OPCS database environment (server) to extract GOL data, then the query generates a file and then the file is uploaded to the IDE database (automated).
- **5** – The new EDA Website (including this manual mapping process), is targeted to go-live by the end of FY22.





EDA Future State Systems Architecture



Assumptions:

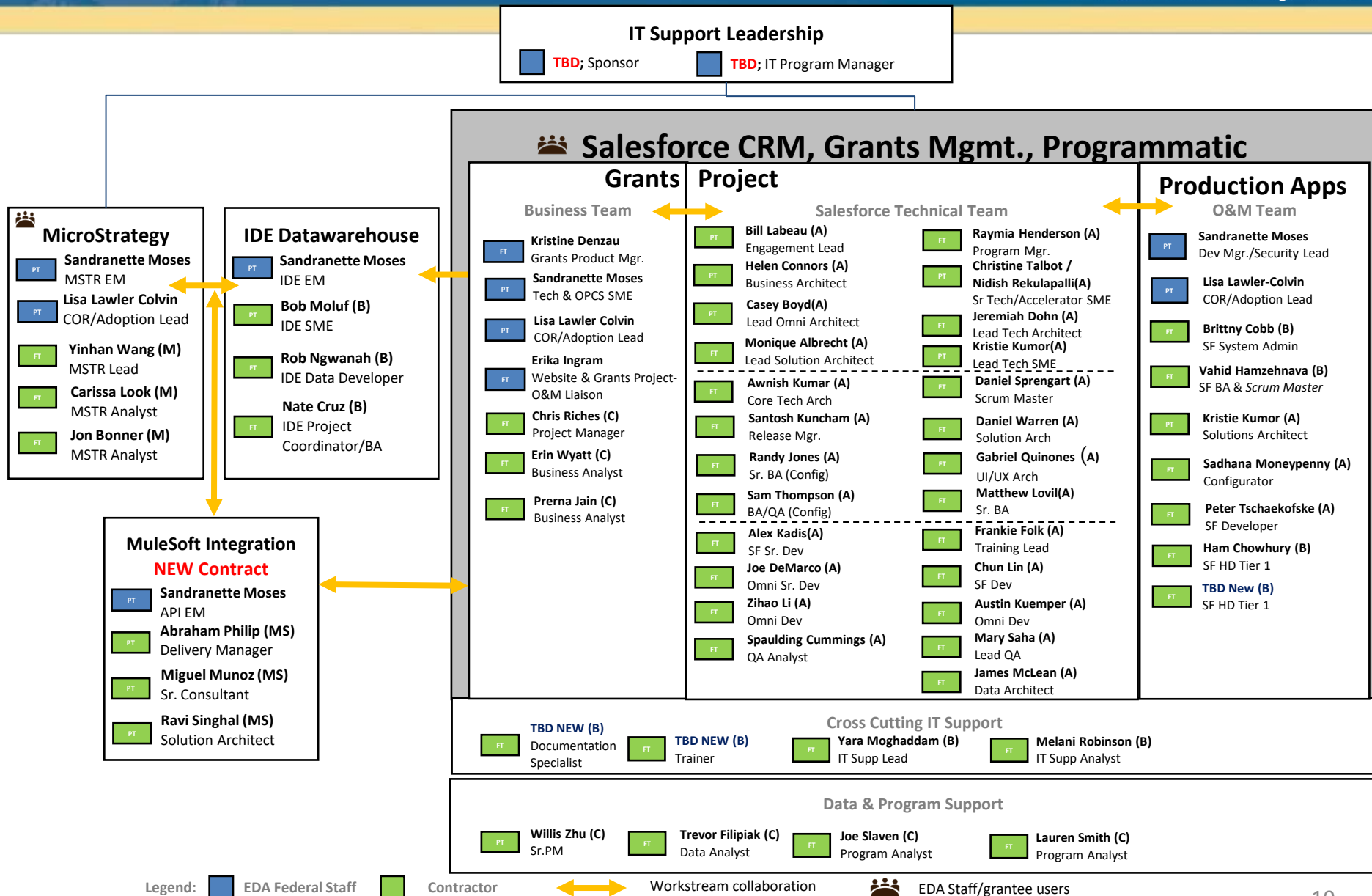
- * EDA future BI Tool has not been decided yet, primarily for external facing maps/visualizations (PowerBI or Tableau)
- Once OPCS/GOL is retired (~May 23), EDA dependency on IDE and MicroStrategy is removed
- DOC GEMS will maintain single data warehouse for grant data from all bureaus, and use their preferred BI Tool
- NTIA will move to eRA in FY24 along with NIST transition



EDA ITMP Support Team Org Chart



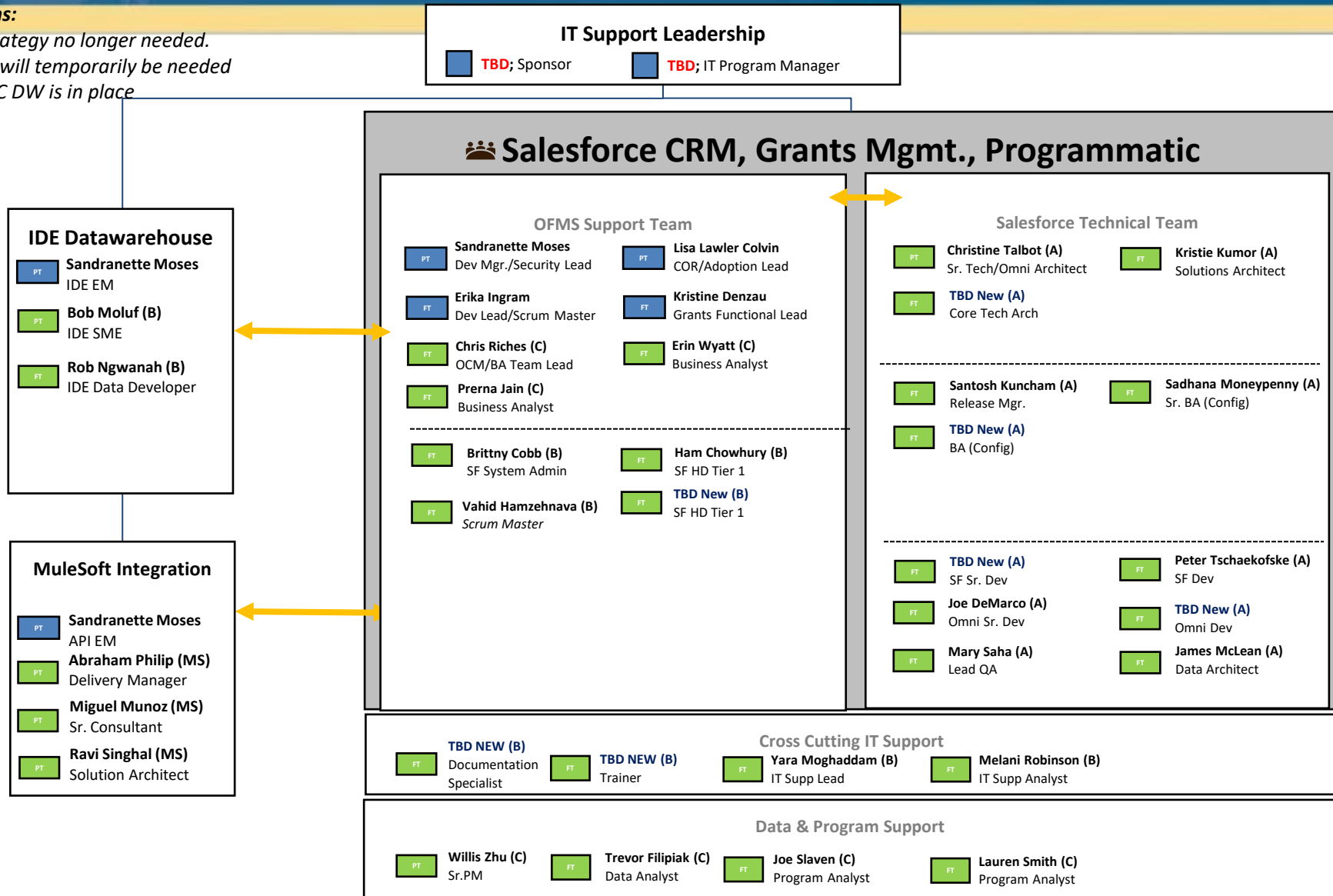
EDA ITMP Support Team Org Chart (Now – May 23)



EDA ITMP Support Team Org Chart (June 23 going forward)

Assumptions:

- MicroStrategy no longer needed.
- EDA IDE will temporarily be needed until DOC DW is in place



Legend: EDA Federal Staff

Contractor

Workstream collaboration

EDA Staff/grantee users

EDA Grants Systems Support Cost Assessment



FY22 – 25 Salesforce Grants Cost Estimate

Category	Name	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Licenses	SF EDA Staff & Applicant/Grantee Portal Licenses <u>(CRM BPA)</u>	\$697,817 200 Staff	\$970,000 300 Staff	\$1,100,000 350 Staff	\$1,100,000 350 Staff
	SF CRM Analytics, Tableau, & Tableau Public Maps Licenses <u>(CRM BPA)</u>	\$0 0 Staff	\$300,000 150 Staff	\$400,000 250 Staff	\$400,000 250 Staff
	MuleSoft Licenses <u>(CRM BPA)</u>	\$48,062	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
	TOTAL Licenses	\$745,879	\$1,570,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000
Services	SF Acumen Grants Development & O&M Services (includes CRM Analytics Services) <u>(CRM BPA)</u>	\$4,567,261 Build + O&M	\$8,000,000 Build + O&M	\$3,000,000 O&M	\$2,000,000 O&M
	MuleSoft Services <u>(CRM BPA)</u>	\$220,438 Build + O&M	\$800,000 Build + O&M	\$400,000 O&M	\$200,000 O&M
	IT Support (SF, MSTR, OPCS) - <u>BRMi/ASRC (8A SB)</u>	\$2,005,000	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000	\$1,900,000
	Grants System Support – <u>Censeo/Axiom (8A SB)</u>	\$1,158,558	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000	\$800,000
	CDO: Data and Program Support – <u>Censeo/Tripoint (8A SB)</u>	\$1,051,766	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
	TOTAL Services	\$9,003,023	\$13,100,000	\$7,700,000	\$5,900,000
TOTAL Salesforce Licenses & Services		\$9,748,902	\$14,670,000	\$9,500,000	\$7,700,000

Notes:

- FY22 estimates are based on actual vendor quotes, while FY23-24 are high level estimates
- Starting FY22, additional SF OFMS support resources added to accommodate expansion of users from SF grants system
- Excludes SF App – KnowWho Congressional contacts integration, SF backup solution, & any costs associated to future external systems



FY22 – 25 Other IT System Costs

Name	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
1. GOL/OPCS Licenses & Services – NOAA (<u>IAA/MOU</u>)	\$1,094,916	\$1,094,916	\$0	\$0
2. DOC GEMS eRA & BAS Integration (<u>IAA/MOU</u>)	\$505,414	\$707,307	\$707,307	\$707,307
3. PM, Website, SharePoint, Security - (<u>IAA/MOU</u>)	\$1,787,500	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
4. EDA ISSO - (<u>IAA/MOU</u>)	\$209,683	\$209,683	\$209,683	\$209,683
5. MicroStrategy Licenses & Services – (<u>NASA SWEP GWAC</u>)	\$882,948	\$650,000	\$0	\$0
6. IDE Dev Services – <u>BRMi/ASRC (8A SB)</u>	\$700,000	\$700,000	\$400,000	\$0
7. IDE AWS Services – NOAA - (<u>IAA/MOU</u>)	\$368,983	\$368,983	\$150,000	\$0
8. DOC GEMS Datawarehouse – OCIO - TBD	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000
TOTAL Other IT Systems Licenses & Services	\$5,549,444	\$5,230,889	\$2,466,990	\$2,116,990
TOTAL Salesforce License & Services (from previous slide)	\$10,080,402	\$14,670,000	\$9,500,000	\$7,700,000
Grand Total	\$15,629,846	\$19,900,889	\$11,966,990	\$9,816,990

Notes:

- 1. & 5. Assumes GOL/OPCS & MicroStrategy will be retired by end of FY23. All reporting/analytics performed in SF/CRM Analytics
- 2. \$707,307 is planned eRA cost for FY23 based on the original shared agreement. Could negotiate reduction in outyears.
- 3. Assumes reduction of needed for Website/SharePoint services in out years.
- 6-8. Assumes IDE will be EDA's interim Datawarehouse until DOC GEMS is ready to take over.



EDA Salesforce Grants Initiative Status



EDA Grants Management System Transition Overview

Scope and Phased Timeline

- January 2023– First go-live of new Salesforce based Grants Management System (GMS) starting with accepting new PWEAA, Short-Term Planning, Local TA, and RNTA applications.
 - Capabilities: Application Intake, Tech Review, Selection, Pre-Award and Award functionality including CBS and USA Spending integrations using MuleSoft.
- FY23 Q2-Q3 – Remaining lifecycle capabilities, all remaining new NOFOs/programs, and data migration and replacement of OPCS and GOL.

Benefits

- Approach Benefits – Multiphase transition enables staff and applicants/grantees to slowly learn and transition to the new system and reduces technical risk.
- Key Feature Benefits – Many advanced capabilities in a single platform/database:
 - Applicants apply directly in EDA GMS with structured form data and eliminates need for EDA staff to manually enter data.
 - Robust workflow engine (including Construction workflow) and centralized task inbox to streamline interactions and actions between applicants/grantees and EDA staff.
 - Less reliance on spreadsheets and easier monitoring/tracking of work at various levels and lifecycle stages.



EDA Staff Supporting Grants Initiative

EDA staff from HQ and all regions have been providing extensive input to Salesforce requirements and helped us to align on the capabilities that are most critical for the MVP release.

Workgroup Leadership

- Jorge Ayala, AuRO (Executive Champion)
- Rachael Gamble, DRO (Executive Champion)
- ~~Kyong Pak, OFMS~~
- Sandranette Moses, OFMS

HQ SMEs

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| • Chris Anderson, OCC | • Amanda Kosty, OIE |
| • Bob White, OFMS | • Meisha McDaniel, OIE |
| • Milton Dunton, OFMS | • Matthew Knutson, PRNTA |
| • Eric Smith, OIE | • Darmika Stanfield, OEAC |
| • Chivas Grannum, OIE | |

Core Team

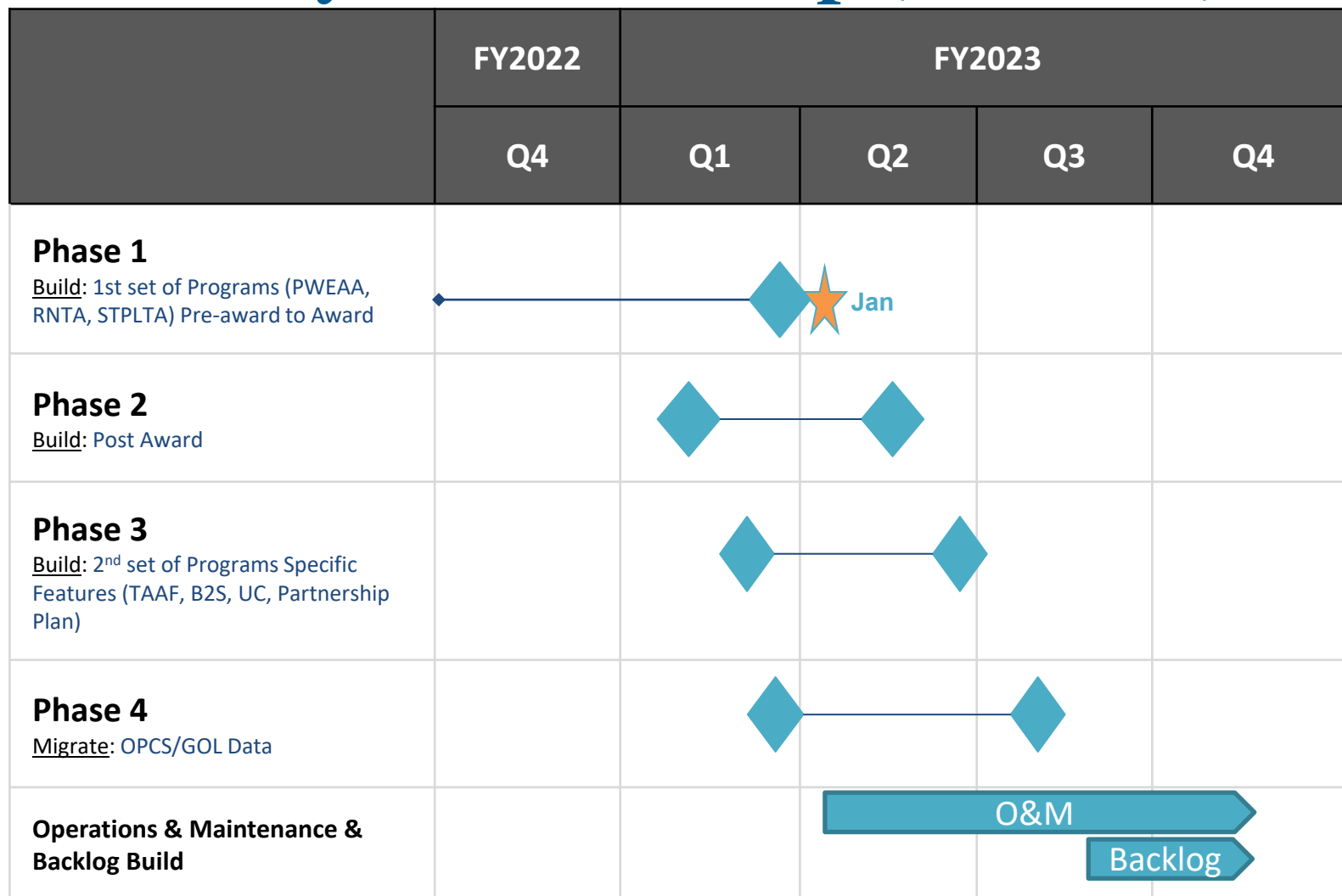
- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Jason Goodwin, PRNTA | • Jessica Falk, AuRO |
| • Bernadette Grafton, PRNTA | • Miriam Nettles-Kearse, ORA/TAAF |
| • Mitchell Harrison, PRNTA | • Ryan Smith, ORA |

Regional SMEs

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Shalini Bansal, SRO | • Keith Dyche, AtRO |
| • Cindy Edwards, DRO | • Kristin Gordon, AtRO |
| • Dennis Foldenauer, CRO | • Julianne Kingery, DRO |
| • Debra Beavin, PRO | • Trisha Korbas, AuRO |
| • Corey Dunn, AuRO | |



Grants System Roadmap (Notional)



Notes:

- Phase 2-4 Milestones are tentative and will be solidified as requirements/designs are completed



MVP Scope and Prioritization

Scope for MVP

- Core “must-have” capabilities to execute grants lifecycle for all current EDA programs
- Core EDA users (applicants/grantees & grants staff) & data have fully transitioned from OPCS/GOL into Salesforce
- *Note: Developing remaining capabilities and enhancing features already built, will be addressed in priority order with a smaller O&M development team post-MVP*

Prioritization Criteria

- The following factors were considered when determining prioritization for MVP:
 - Is capability currently met by GOL/OPCS?
 - Is capability currently met by another system/tool (e.g., Qualtrics)?
 - Can associated process/activity be separated from the core grants process?
 - Is associated data required for reporting?

MVP scope is planned to be completed at the conclusion of Phase 4. However, we will be utilizing an Agile methodology, so timeline and scope may evolve as the project progresses. We will keep leadership apprised of any changes.



Risks

Risk Description

Mitigation Strategies

Scope/Schedule Tradeoffs

Medium

- Given fixed resources and timeline, MVP scope and schedule may be at risk as requirements are further defined

- Closely monitor progress to ensure project is tracking to planned scope/schedule
- Develop mitigation/escalation plan to respond to issues impacting scope/schedule and engage leadership as necessary to respond

Integration Complexity

Medium

- Integrating EDA SF with CBS and SAM.gov could be technically challenging/resource intensive

- Limit extent of integration to critical award/financial data
- Leverage MuleSoft to simplify/accelerate integration
- Collaborate with NTIA on joint EDA/NTIA SF approach

Dependency on External Parties

Medium

- EDA is dependent on NOAA to continue manual financial processing and support integration
- GEMS PMO or the Grants QSMO/OIG may create problems if they disapprove of our approach

- Coordinate with NOAA to confirm capacity/willingness to continue providing support
- Update business case as needed to respond to any concerns from Grants QSMO/OIG



Reporting/ Analytics Approach



Reporting/Analytics/Mapping Roadmap

	Transition (Oct-Apr 23)	Full MVP Release (May 23)	Post-MVP
Targeted Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic Salesforce dashboards and exportable reports to manually integrate FY23 apps/awards with legacy data for analysis in MicroStrategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderate Salesforce dashboards, reports and maps that (at minimum) replicate what is available now	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced Salesforce, dashboard, reports, and maps that surpass what is available now and leverage future data integrations
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Export of application status report• Export of grantee award/location data to support website map	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pipeline (MicroStrategy) dashboard• Post-Award Construction Reports• Project Location mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pipeline report that integrates financial data• Maps with overlays of distress levels or RLF lending areas

EDA will progressively develop more robust dashboards, reports and maps over time as new capabilities are added, developers/analysts are added to the team, and use of the new SF grants system yields data quality improvements



CRM Analytics Features



One Analytics Vision

Enabling Smarter Decisions powered by Tableau CRM

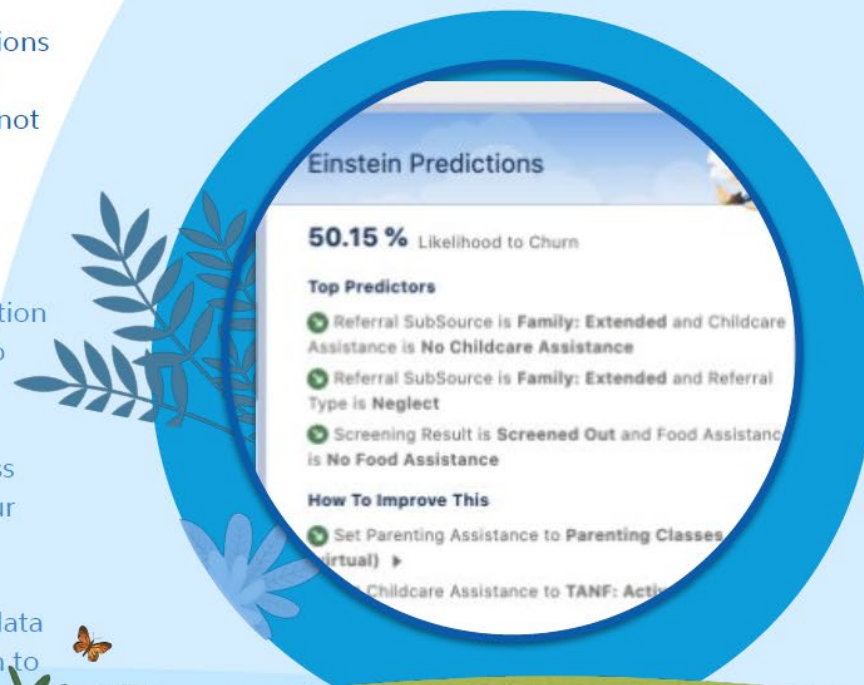
Simplified Architecture: Built directly on the Salesforce platform—no integration work required. Inherits Salesforce's security, hierarchy, and permission settings.

Ease of Use: Delivers reports, analysis, predictions and recommendations within the Salesforce workflows. Uncover simple answers to complex business questions using understandable AI models built with clicks, not code. Learn what happened and why, so you can better predict what comes next.

Make Smarter Decisions, Faster: Because you're empowered with updates on your data right in the flow of your work it's easy to take action in the flow. Get the right data, in the right place, to the right people so you can take action to optimize results

Stay on Top of your Data: You can set alerts and watchlists so business users get notified when key KPIs reach certain thresholds or when your business metrics change.

Empower Everyone with Insights: Share important insights on your data with everyone who matters. Bringing more people to the conversation to collaborate, get jobs done faster, and celebrate more success.



MicroStrategy to SF CRM Analytics Transition

- **Transition from to SF CRM Analytics & Tableau**

- FY23 Q1/Q2: Start building SF/CRM Analytics Dashboards/Reports/Maps.
- FY23 Q3: Stop using MicroStrategy once all OPCS/GOL award data is migrated into SF.
- FY23 Q3: Fully roll-out SF/CRM Analytics Dashboards/Reports/Maps and Tableau Public Map to Website.

- **Benefits:**

- EDA Staff User – Single streamlined user experience and ability to drill down to record level enables EDA staff to utilize visualizations/analytics throughout processing grants.
- Management/Oversight User – Real-time, top-down visibility of application/award status across any level (e.g., All, HQ Program Only, Region Only, Team Only).
- Public User – Using Tableau Public/Proper allows seamless display of Tableau maps/visualization in EDA's website and avoids a complex data integration process/additional Website mapping software.
- Complexity – Prevents user confusion and extra work caused by duplicate dashboards/reports in Salesforce vs. MicroStrategy.
- Complexity – Consolidates two data repositories into one, which reduces technical complexity and development services needed.
- Cost – Cost savings if 1) MicroStrategy is no longer used & 2) IDE data warehouse is moved to DOC OCIO/GEMS ownership and management.
- EDA Staff User/Cost – Since BAS will be using Tableau, EDA staff will only have to learn Tableau once & potential enterprise Tableau cost savings across DOC.



Next Steps

- Follow up to align on roles/responsibilities of the IT Counsel and engagement with ITMP OFMS/support staff
- Determine governance structure/process, decision escalation approach, regular communications, meetings, etc.
- Share additional artifacts/information (e.g., SOW's, IT Costs Tracker, briefings, etc.)



EDA ITMP Roadmap as of 8/15/22

