



State Economic Development Executives Network (SEDE)

Helping State Economic Development Leaders Thrive

The State Economic Development Executives (SEDE) Network's Winter Networking Meeting was held on February 27-28, 2023 in New Orleans, LA. The meeting included discussions on a range of topics such as site development, workforce development, housing, remote work, automation, and childcare.

The leaders began by sharing hot topics in their respective states and offered one or two takeaways they hoped to glean. Issues included manufacturing, capital investment, housing, federal funds, education, and job creation. The participants talked about measuring incentive performance and discussed how to move away from job creation as the primary metric. Workforce challenges were also discussed, including the waning student pipeline and declining population growth. The participants also talked about incentivizing companies to offer employer-provided training and childcare.

One key topic was industrial site development and how to attract high-wage, high-demand jobs to a region or area. David Rosenberg, COO and Chief of Staff for the Indiana Economic Development Corp. (IEDC), shared insights about the [LEAP program](#), in which IEDC works with colleges throughout the state. IEDC also acquired a 9000-acre site for prospect development. Other attendees discussed their best practices for site selection and infrastructure financing. They also discussed brownfield development and how some regions have limited liability laws to protect future developers.

Another key conversation, led by Iris Santos Diaz, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Economic Development and Commerce of Puerto Rico, covered talent strategies used to address workforce challenges. Diaz discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the national workforce and the acceleration of three trends: remote work, growth in e-commerce, and automation. Mike Graney (WV) discussed various programs in West Virginia to jump-start employment participation and reskill people, such as [Jobs and Hope](#), a program to support individuals in recovery to return to the workforce, and childcare initiatives. Other leaders talked about programs in development to provide tax credits for childcare and various workforce programs like a fast-track program for high school diplomas and a workforce program for individuals with Down syndrome. Attendees also heard about a potential SEDE trip to Germany to learn more about apprenticeship programs.

Alejandra Castillo, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce (EDA), discussed the unprecedented federal funds they have received and the Request for Information (RFIs) currently open about the proposed ReCompete and Tech Hubs grant programs. She invited states to submit responses to the RFI as well as any thoughts on EDA. Mojdeh Bahar, the Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), discussed NIST's management of four programs and how MEP leveraged CARES dollars to boost supply chains and manufacturing.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of SEDE network business. Leaders proposed methods to integrate new members into the network including options for outreach and promotion. Sandra Watson also led a conversation about the SEDE charter and how to promote the financial sustainability of the network. A more comprehensive meeting summary is available at under the Resources tab at stateeconomicdevelopment.org (please sign-in).