

APPLICATION FORM

Stronger Economies Together Program

Deadline for Applications: May 26, 2011; 11:59 p.m. Central Time

Please Complete All Sections of the Application Form

Part A: Information about Your Regional Team

We would like to gather some information about your region team and the key contact person.

- a. Name of your Regional Team (if none has been decided yet, just provide a name that best describes the geographic area of your regional group).

NOTE: For purposes of this application, a region is defined as an area that encompasses three or more counties/parishes that are located contiguous to one another. It is possible for such counties/parishes to cross state boundaries.

- b. What counties/parishes are included in your region? _____

- c. Main contact person for your regional team: _____

- d. Email address for your main contact person: _____

- e. Telephone number(s) for your regional team or contact person: _____

- f. Team or contact person’s mailing address (City/State/Zip): _____

- g. Please place an “X” by the ONE statement that best describes your regional team:

A brand new regional group that has been organized for the purpose of applying for the SET program

A regional organization that is one year old or less and that is still trying to get off the ground in developing a sound economic development plan for the region

A regional organization that is one year old or less with a solid economic development plan taking shape (or in place) for the region

A regional group that has been organized for more than one year, but is inactive and/or in need of help to get back on track

An established regional group that has been in place for one year or more and has developed and is pursuing an effective regional economic development plan.

Part B: Brief Description of Your Region (400 word limit)

Present an overview of your region in terms of some of its key characteristics. Provide a concise picture of your region drawing on quantitative and qualitative information. Here are the types of information you might include in your description:

- *Economic region:* Is this region an economic region? That is, do you have evidence from a university-based economic analysis unit or other independent reputable entity that the counties/parishes in your region, taken together, constitute an economic region (or an emerging economic region)? Please explain.
- *Key sectors that make-up your economy and the current health of these sectors:* Are they stable, expanding, declining, etc.? In general, tell us about how the economy of your region is doing and why. Is the region experiencing economic distress or high rates of poverty?
- *Important population/demographic characteristics of the region.* Is its population growing or declining and why? Is the composition of the population changing (such as getting older or younger, shifting racial or ethnic composition, and the migration flow of population into or out of the region)?
- *Current attributes of the workforce.* Are workers involved in lower/higher quality jobs? Is the educational status of your workforce an issue?

In sum, include information that will provide a snapshot of the current state of your region's economy and some of the important social and demographic challenges/opportunities that exist in the region.

Part C: Benefits/Challenges of Pursuing a Regional Economic Development Plan (400 word limit)

1. What do you believe are the major benefits of building an economic development plan that encompasses the counties/parishes that have been selected to be part of your region?
2. What do you anticipate will be some of the key challenges that your team will face as it seeks to develop and launch a regional economic development plan?

Part D: Involvement in the SET Initiative (400 word limit)

1. Explain why your regional team would like to be part of the SET program. That is, indicate why you believe your team is serious about using the SET process as a springboard for thinking and acting strategically in building a stronger regional economy.
2. Are there specific topics associated with the SET program that your team is likely to find most helpful/valuable? If so, which topics and explain why these are likely to be important to your team? (See the list of topics at: http://srdc.msstate.edu/set/files/set_overview.pdf).

