

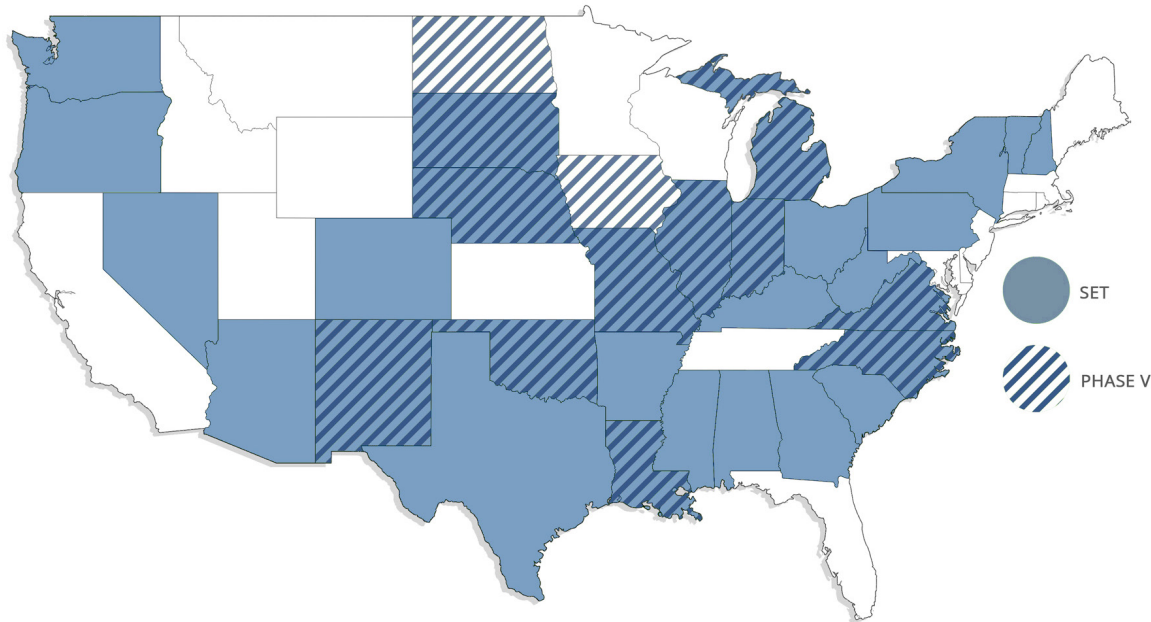


## Stronger Economies Together

### PURPOSE OF SET

Stronger Economies Together (SET) enables communities and counties in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint for their multi-county region that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of that region.

Creating, attracting and retaining jobs as a single rural county in isolation from other nearby counties is becoming increasingly ineffective. In today's global marketplace, economic development progress is more likely to be realized when rural and metro counties work together as a region to assess their resources and then design and implement plans that build on their assets and comparative economic strengths.



Launched in 2010 by USDA Rural Development and the nation's four Regional Rural Development Centers and their land-grant university partners, this exciting

### BENEFITS OF SET:

- Step-by-step coaching to guide the design and implementation of a practical and viable regional economic development plan
- In-depth data tailored to the region, describing its current and emerging clusters, comparative economic advantages, and detailed demographic and socio-economic information
- Tools to uncover local assets and resources that can advance the region's economic strategies Technical assistance from Extension educators, USDA RD state staff, the Regional Rural Development Centers, and the Purdue Center for Regional Development to guide the initial stages of implementation of regional goals and strategies

## PLANNING PROCESS: 6 TO 7 MONTHS

### Launching SET through Civic Engagement

*(Time: 4 hours)*

- Explore in-depth demographic and workforce features of the region
- Identify opportunities to guide the regional efforts
- *Products:* List of opportunities to explore; substantial region-wide engagement in the planning and implementing process

### Examining Economic Data for the Region

*(Time: 4 hours)*

- Define the evidence base for working together as a region
- Identify economic clusters to explore further
- Exploring regional economic data
- *Products:* Draft evidence description for how the economic data led to industry cluster identification

### Exploring the Region's Unique Economic Opportunities

*(Time: 4 hours)*

- Examine in-depth industry analysis
- Identify appropriate strategies to build on regional strengths
- *Products:* Selection of 3-5 key opportunities to pursue

### Identifying the Region's Assets and Challenges

*(Time: 4 hours)*

- Examine the region's key assets and challenges related to the opportunities identified
- *Products:* Review of available assets for action; potential new connections among assets to strengthen relevant work

### Developing Goals, Actions, and Measures Based on Consideration of Region's Unique Advantages

*(Time: 5 hours)*

- Identify appropriate goals, strategies and action to strengthen the region's advantages
- *Products:* Draft initial goals, strategies and work plan.

### Tailored Modules *(Time: varies by module)*

- Tourism
- Food Systems
- Entrepreneurship
- Land Use Planning
- Networking
- Targeted Attraction Strategies

## IMPLEMENTATION: 6 TO 7 MONTHS

- Develop a model for action and accountability
- Design leadership structure appropriate for regional plan implementation
- Identify technical assistance needs for success
- Secure resources needed for success

## CONTACTS

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