

# Indiana Southwest Central Region

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q. What is the planning grant for?

The purpose of the planning grant is to facilitate the development of a regional economic development strategy and enhance the quality of life in Southwest Central Indiana. The planning phase will help identify opportunities, assets and resources that can be better leveraged to provide connections and economic opportunities for its residents and communities.

### Q. Who funded this project?

Lilly Endowment awarded a \$650,000 planning grant to the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership (CICP) Foundation. The Foundation will support the effort through Energy Systems Network (ESN) by providing the infrastructure and administrative assistance to the steering committee of regional leaders.

### Q. What counties or areas are in the region?

Brown, Crawford, Daviess, Dubois, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange, Owen and Washington Counties comprise the 11 county area included in the planning grant. Throughout the planning process, the geographical focus may evolve as the plan develops.

### Q. How were the boundaries of the region determined?

These counties include a mix of Indiana Department of Workforce Development Economic Growth Region 8 and areas served by Radius |Indiana. Through a preliminary planning grant, ESN worked with Indiana Business Research Center to gather extensive data and conduct asset mapping in the area for life sciences, defense, education, hospitality, entertainment and other industries, which indicated strong connections among these counties.

### Q. What will the grant be used for?

The grant will pay for national consultants, local project leadership and professional staff time, several benchmarking trips to study other successful regional developments throughout the country, as well as hosting regional listening sessions and other opportunities for public engagement and input.

### **Q. Why is there a steering committee, what is its role and who is on it?**

The steering committee was organized from a cross-section of leading institutions, organizations and companies long associated with this area of the state. The steering committee is made up of the following:

- Brian Blackwell, Director, Office of Engagement, NSWC Crane
- Duane Embree, National Director of Military and Defense Initiatives, Ivy Tech Community College
- Paul Mitchell, President & CEO, Energy Systems Network
- Dan Peterson, Vice President of Industry and Government Affairs, Cook Group; *Steering Committee Chair*
- Tina Peterson, President & CEO, Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County
- Becky Skillman, President & CEO, Radius|Indiana
- William Stephan, Vice President for Engagement, Indiana University

### **Q. What other similar projects has Lilly Endowment funded?**

Lilly Endowment has been involved in supporting the implementation of several regional development plans across the state of Indiana, including [OrthoWorx](#) supporting the Warsaw area, the [Talent Initiative](#) in Fort Wayne, and [Economic Opportunities through Education by 2015](#) (ECO<sub>15</sub>) in the Columbus area.

### **Q. What are the strengths of this region that convinced Lilly Endowment to fund this planning effort?**

This region is the home of Indiana University, a world class research university, and Naval Support Activity Crane, a military base which houses Indiana's only federal laboratory, which collectively employ more than 10,000 people, including over 2,000 scientists, engineers and technicians. It boasts a well-established and growing life sciences industry that employs 4,400 people. There is a high concentration of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) jobs in the region, and Martin County has the top per capita STEM employment in Indiana. The region also has the largest concentration of state forests, parks, lakes, fish and wildlife area in Indiana. There is a strong leisure and hospitality sector including French Lick Resorts and Casino, Brown County, Nashville, and Bloomington arts and music events.

### **Q. How long will this process take?**

It is estimated to take approximately one year, with a finalized strategic plan generated by mid-2014.

### **Q. What is the expected deliverable at the end of the process?**

The strategic planning effort will result in a written document that incorporates the input of leaders of government, corporate and not for profit institutions, educational institutions, community foundations, expert consultants, the local steering committee and the general public. The final proposal will include recommendations and an actionable plan for advancing the region's most compelling opportunities relative to economic development, workforce development and quality of life.

### **Q. What comes next?**

The steering committee has already begun meeting and has approved a series of public listening sessions. Steering committee members Becky Skillman of Radius|Indiana and Tina Peterson of the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County will work with local partners in each county to coordinate these meetings. ESN will engage with experts and consultants who have demonstrated experience in delivering successful regional growth. Additionally, the committee will draw from the experience of other regions across the country through benchmarking visits where they will connect with their peers in other high-growth locales.