



Request for Proposals to Host a NewGeography Economic Opportunity & Growth Forum

Introduction

For nearly a decade NewGeography.com has provided an online forum for discussing the places where we live and work and highlighting insights into how places are transforming and mobilizing for success in today's rapidly changing economy.

The NewGeography Economic Opportunity & Growth Forum brings this know-how to your city or region to help leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs develop strategies for grappling with challenges and seizing opportunities that will propel local growth. A confluence of potent forces is creating an era of localism and decentralization across the planet making local decision-making, local resource mobilization and action more important than ever before.

There is no single formula for success for any place in the 21st century. Growth comes differently to different places; some are suburban, other urban, still other small town. Each possesses specific assets and unique challenges. Nonetheless, to foster and sustain a robust local economy a city or region must take full advantage of its unique combination of resources, culture, infrastructure, core competencies in industry and agriculture and the skills of entrepreneurs and workers.

The one-day Forum addresses the basic fundamentals to propel growth including policies that stress essential physical infrastructure, investments in basic and skill-oriented education, and a favorable business environment that facilitates free enterprise and entrepreneurship. It will include an extensive data analysis of the region's economics and demographics, with a strong eye for possible competitors.

Joel Kotkin, an internationally recognized authority on economic and social trends and, a founder and Executive Editor of NewGeography.com, begins each forum with a high-level look at consequential trends and circumstances that affect local and regional growth. This is followed by an economic assessment of the local and regional economy and subsequent panel discussions involving key local leaders in business, government, education and the civic sectors. Frequent contributors to NewGeography, who are renowned experts in economics, demography and urban/regional planning, also participate – selected based on the specific circumstances and needs of the conference location.

Each Forum culminates in afternoon strategy sessions that lead to the identification of priority strategies where enhanced collaboration is needed and action steps for building support and mobilizing resources and talents to put your city or region on a solid growth trajectory.

Upon completion of each Forum, the NewGeography team will summarize the outcomes of the Forum and deliver a concise, user-friendly strategy roadmap to use in implementation. A summary of the strategy roadmap may be published on NewGeography.com, with the approval of the host.

Benefits to Hosting

Hosting the NewGeography Forum will benefit your city or region by making use of the expertise of the NewGeography team and the attendees to formulate actionable strategies that will accelerate growth. In addition, the Forum has these additional important benefits.

- ✓ Brand your city or region as an epicenter of activity – or as one mayor put it – “ to identify our city as a hotbed of advanced thinking” in highly promising areas of future opportunity
- ✓ Improve current programs or launch new initiatives that can make your city or region an epicenter of research and development, innovation, manufacturing, or service in one or more economic or technology sectors that hold considerable potential.
- ✓ Showcase existing or emerging initiatives and innovations in your city and region.
- ✓ Identify and create support for *catalytic projects and initiatives* that can be a fulcrum of change for multiple opportunities and launch a new trajectory for the 21st century in an economy
- ✓ Involve key partners from outside the region in formulating strategies and action steps that can be implemented immediately.
- ✓ Tell a compelling, aspirational story that commits people (inside and outside your city or region) to the possibilities.

NewGeography anticipates doing three to four Forums in 2017. This Request for Proposals details the requirements for hosting a Forum and provides guidelines for submitting a proposal.

Local Committee

Cities or regions are expected to form a Local Committee that will serve as the primary conference host, coordinator and liaison with the NewGeography team.

The local Committee is responsible for the following:

- Planning: The Committee will work with the NewGeography team to plan the program for the conference including identifying themes and issues of local significance, local speakers, a place to hold the events and organizations that can help to promote the Forum. Planning for a Forum should start no less than 90 days in advance of the date the forum will be held. Members of the NewGeography team will make one advance visit to meet with the Committee to plan the event, with subsequent planning meetings held by conference call.
- Fundraising: The Committee agrees that it will raise at least \$75,000 to pay for 1) the NewGeography team's participation in planning and conducting the Forum, including an economic assessment of the city or region and 2) writing and publishing a final strategy report.

Please submit an electronic copy of your proposal by e-mail to Delore Zimmerman at delore@praxisg.com. Any questions should be directed to Delore Zimmerman by e-mail or by phone (701) 775-3354.

Proposals should include:

1. A letter from the organization(s) submitting the proposal and acknowledging and agreeing to undertake the actions and responsibilities of the local committee detailed in this document.
2. The letter should also describe the current situation in the host city/region and identify issues to be addressed during the forum that are central to the host's economic future.
3. The dates proposed and alternative date options.
4. Suggested venue(s) for the Forum.
5. Any other materials that would support the proposal.

About NewGeography

NewGeography is a joint venture of Joel Kotkin and Praxis Strategy Group
newgeography.com is an independent media website that publishes global news, articles and information on a daily basis about economics, demographics and policy.

newgeography.com reaches top-level science and technology professionals, business leaders, government officials, investment professionals, and economic development agency professionals worldwide.

Joel Kotkin

Described by the New York Times as “America’s uber-geographer,” Joel Kotkin is an internationally-recognized authority on global, economic, political and social trends. His new book, THE HUMAN CITY: Urbanism for the Rest of Us, was published by Agate in April, 2016.

Mr. Kotkin is the Presidential Fellow in Urban Futures at Chapman University in Orange, California and Executive Director of the Houston-based Center for Opportunity Urbanism (opportunityurbanism.org). He is Executive Editor of the widely read website www.newgeography.com and writes the weekly “New Geographer” column for Forbes.com.

He is the author of seven previously published books, including the widely praised THE NEW CLASS CONFLICT (Telos Press), which describes the changing dynamics of class in America.

Other past books include THE NEXT HUNDRED MILLION: America in 2050, published by The Penguin Press. The book explores how the nation will evolve in the next four decades. THE CITY: A GLOBAL HISTORY and TRIBES: How Race, Religion and Identity Are Reshaping the Global Economy, were also published in numerous languages including Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, German and Arabic.

Over the past decade, Mr. Kotkin has completed studies focusing on several major cities, including a worldwide study focusing on the future of London, Mumbai and Mexico City, and studies of New York, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Houston, San Bernardino and St. Louis, among others. In 2010 he completed an international study on “the new world order” for the Legatum Institute in London, UK that traced trans-national ethnic networks, particularly in East Asia. He also has worked in smaller communities, including a report -working with Praxis Strategy Group - on the rise of the Great Plains for Texas Tech University.

Praxis Strategy Group

Praxis Strategy Group is an economic research, policy, strategy and development company that works with leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs in business, government, higher education and the non-profit sector to develop and implement action-oriented initiatives and business ventures. Praxis Strategy Group was founded in 1994 and has offices in Grand Forks and Fargo, North Dakota.

Praxis Strategy Group's core services for development organizations focus on industry analyses, competitive assessments, development strategy and the specification of new business development opportunities. We offer expert assistance in formulating strategy, identifying opportunities and implementing solutions that best meet our clients' capabilities and requirements. Clients include communities, regions, states and private-public partnerships involving the "triple helix" comprised of universities/tech colleges, businesses and government.

Praxis Strategy Group has extensive experience in helping multi-stakeholder groups develop initiatives that get results. Over the past several years, we have worked with groups in multiple communities throughout the region, helping identify solutions to problems, engage citizens in important community discussions, and developing strategies to improve economic vitality and livability.

Policy and Research In 2015 we and Joel Kotkin authored the sixth annual Enterprising States report for the U.S. Chamber Foundation, a report assessing economic performance and programs in all 50 states. In 2014 our "Enterprising Cities" report profiled programs in seven cities, making the case for local business engagement. In 2012 we released "The Rise of the Great Plains," a research report with Texas Tech University outlining the future trajectory of the American Great Plains Region, "Clues From the Past, The Midwest as an Aspirational Region," and this year a report outlining the nation's new emerging growth corridors. Our widely shared four-page spread in Forbes Magazine profiled America's seven emerging "nations" and three city-states. Additionally, our research and rankings on the STEM economy, high-tech, heavy metal manufacturing, and 2016 Regions to Watch have appeared recently in Forbes.

Economic Development We've worked with Bend, OR and Santa Maria, CA to create 1,000-day roadmaps for economic development, developed action plans for six task forces as part of the private-sector-led Red River Valley Prosperity Partnership, and recently led four stakeholder committees to develop action plans to address workforce development in the Fargo-Moorhead Region. In recent years we completed an agribusiness cluster analysis and strategy for the Grand Forks Trade Area, worked with the Grand Forks Economic Development Corporation to create a new coalition of workforce and economic development professionals, and helped lead North Dakota's ND2020 and Beyond statewide strategy. In 2015 we led focus groups and a community survey to help a privately financed economic development entity prioritize community issues.

In 2011 Praxis Strategy Group led a Regional Defense/Economic Diversification Project on behalf of Cascade County and the Sweetgrass Development District in Montana (five counties, including Great Falls) that won the 2011 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations.

Community Development In the past three years we've helped local officials mobilize their citizens and partner organizations to address varying community issues, such as housing, child care, homelessness, social services, public library re-development, social

entrepreneurship enterprises, social detox centers, downtown re-development, and public arts policy. Our work in these areas included task force and public input facilitation, policy research and benchmarking, research, public messaging, and action plan development.

Initiative Management Since 2004 we've managed the Red River Valley Research Corridor, a technology-based economic development initiative. Under that project we've coordinated more than two-dozen economic development action summit events to further the region's technology economy. In 2014 and 2015 we coordinated the North Dakota STEM Network, an effort to increase sharing and collaboration among the state's STEM educators and employers.

Enterprise Development In 2012 we co-founded the Red River Corridor Fund to invest in small businesses in 36 partner communities. In the past two years we've led strategic planning sessions for boards and corporate leadership teams running organizations from 20 to 1,200 employees. For the past eight years we've published NewGeography.com, an economic policy and analysis website with more than 150,000 monthly visitors. Our NewGeography Best Cities for Jobs rankings are widely cited by national economic development groups.

International Development Our Praxis Africa joint venture in Ghana produces the Farm Channel educational TV show, operates a model farm, coordinates a Minnetonka-Ghana education partnership, and deploys ag processing and small-scale distributed energy systems.