



# Western NY Power Proceeds Allocation Board

May 25, 2016  
EXHIBIT 4b-C-1

## Western New York Economic Development Fund Recommendation Memo

|   |   |   |                  |
|---|---|---|------------------|
| Applicant Name:                                 | Niagara University (“NU”)   | REDC Region:                            | Western New York |
| Project Type:                                   | Tourism/Marketing   | County:                                 | Niagara          |
| Industry:                                       | Not for Profit  | Locality:                               | Niagara Falls    |
| Amount Requested:                               | \$637,096   | Start Date:                             | June 2015        |
|   |   | Finish Date:                            | May 2017         |
| <b>RECOMMENDED OFFER</b>                        |   |   |                  |
| Recommended Total Award:                        | \$500,000   |   |                  |
| Total Project Cost:                             | \$891,325   |   |                  |
| % of Project Cost Recommended:                  | 56%   |   |                  |
| <b>PROJECT BUDGET (Proposed by Applicant)</b>   |   |   |                  |
| <b>Use of funds</b>                             | <b>Amount</b>   | <b>Source of Funds</b>                  | <b>Amount</b>    |
| Salaries and Wages                              | \$478,340   | WNY EDF                                 | \$637,096        |
| Rent/Lease/Utilities                            | \$158,750   | <b>Committed:</b><br>Niagara University | \$254,229        |
| Supplies and Materials                          | \$ 1,700  |   |                  |
| Training, Research, Conferences                 | \$ 10,500   |   |                  |
| Wi Fi Feasibility Study/VCA                     | \$100,000   |   |                  |
| Leasehold Improvements                          | \$ 20,000   |   |                  |
| Administrative Overhead                         | \$ 23,112   |   |                  |
| Sub-Committee Meeting Costs                     | \$ 6,000  |   |                  |
| Local Travel                                    | \$ 3,000  |   |                  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Project Outcomes – Web/database | \$ 20,000   |   |                  |
| Disney Institute Program Related                | \$ 69,923   |   |                  |
| <b>Total:</b>                                   | <b>\$891,325</b>  |   |                  |
| <b>REGIONAL IMPACT MEASUREMENTS</b>             |   |   |                  |
| Job Commitments:                                | The Funding Track under which the application was submitted does not require job-related commitments. |   |                  |
| Average Salary of Jobs:                         | N/A   |   |                  |
| Indirect Jobs Created                           | N/A   |   |                  |
| Other Impact                                    | None  |   |                  |



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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Adapted from Application)

The applicant is seeking funding to support a project (the “Second Project”) which builds off an initial project funded through the WNY Economic Development Fund (the “First Project”) that established the Niagara Global Tourism Institute (“NGTI”) in the City of Niagara Falls, NY. The Second Project will focus on implementing the following initiatives designed by each of the four sub-committees established under the First Project:

- Research Sub-Committee:
  - Assist current stakeholders in making informed investment decisions;
  - Assist potential stakeholders in assessing the market for new ventures;
  - Provide critical data to monitor performance of the tourism sector.
- Skills Development Sub-Committee:
  - Create a tourism workforce and awareness campaign to engage the community and promote career opportunities in tourism/hospitality;
  - Develop executive and professional training programs aimed at industry professionals and corporate partners and focused on both tourism technology and traditional areas of tourism and hospitality;
  - Address gaps in the tourism workforce and develop programming aimed at improving skills and converting unemployed individuals into qualified personnel through sector needs-based training.
- Technology Sub-Committee:
  - Commission a feasibility study to identify infrastructure needs and costs associated with creating a Wi-Fi network. NGTI will partner with Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation to offer its new tourism platform to individuals using the Wi-Fi network.
- Business Incubation Sub-Committee:
  - Offer incubation space to support small business ventures in the tourism sector. Location within the NGTI allows for direct connections between small business entrepreneurs and NU faculty and students engaged in research and innovation;
  - Attract new investment in downtown Niagara Falls.

### OTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS RECEIVED

|          |     |              |     |
|----------|-----|--------------|-----|
| ESD:     | N/A | NYEDP/DASNY: | N/A |
| NYS EPF: | N/A | Other:       | \$  |

### PREVIOUS STATE ASSISTANCE OFFERED OR PROVIDED

| TYPE           | AMOUNT    | STATUS                             |
|----------------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| WNYPPAB        | \$250,000 | Complete Funding for First Project |
| Niagara County | N/A       |                                    |



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### **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant indicates that NGTI's objectives and tourism focus are of great importance to the region and a natural extension of NU's long term strategy to lead in global tourism education and research. This was substantiated by an independent study performed by Millier Dickenson Blais that helped determine methods in which NU could successfully contribute to the enhancement of the regional tourism industry. These objectives align with WNY Regional Economic Development Council strategies and Governor Cuomo's goal to revitalize the Niagara Falls, NY region.

NGTI recently hired Mr. Patrick Whalen as the organization's interim director. Mr. Whalen is noted for his economic development experience and contacts with specific expertise in business incubation, supply chain management and international trade. He brings a wealth of experience to NGTI including:

- A seven-year tenure with the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus;
- President/owner of PJW Transition Services;
- Division manager at UPS Supply Chain Solutions;
- Owner/president of Fulfillment Systems International;
- Founder/co-founder of more than 20 entrepreneurial ventures; and
- Professional leadership positions for several organizations, including the Buffalo Niagara World Trade Center, the Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Logistics Council and the New York State Business Incubation Association.

Funding this project would provide NGTI more time to create a sustainable organization under new leadership.

### **POSSIBLE FUND BENEFIT USES AND DISBURSEMENT TERMS**

Disburse Fund Benefits periodically in arrears on a cost-sharing basis for a portion of eligible expenses presented as part of an acceptable project budget when Applicant meets prescribed milestones.