



Appalachian Regional Commission Overview

Appalachian Regional Commission



- Created in 1965
- Federal, state and local government partnership
- 13 states
- 423 counties
- 206,000 square miles
- 26+ million people
- 74 local development districts

Unique Structure

Federal

- Federal Co-Chair appointed by the President
- Federal Office Staff

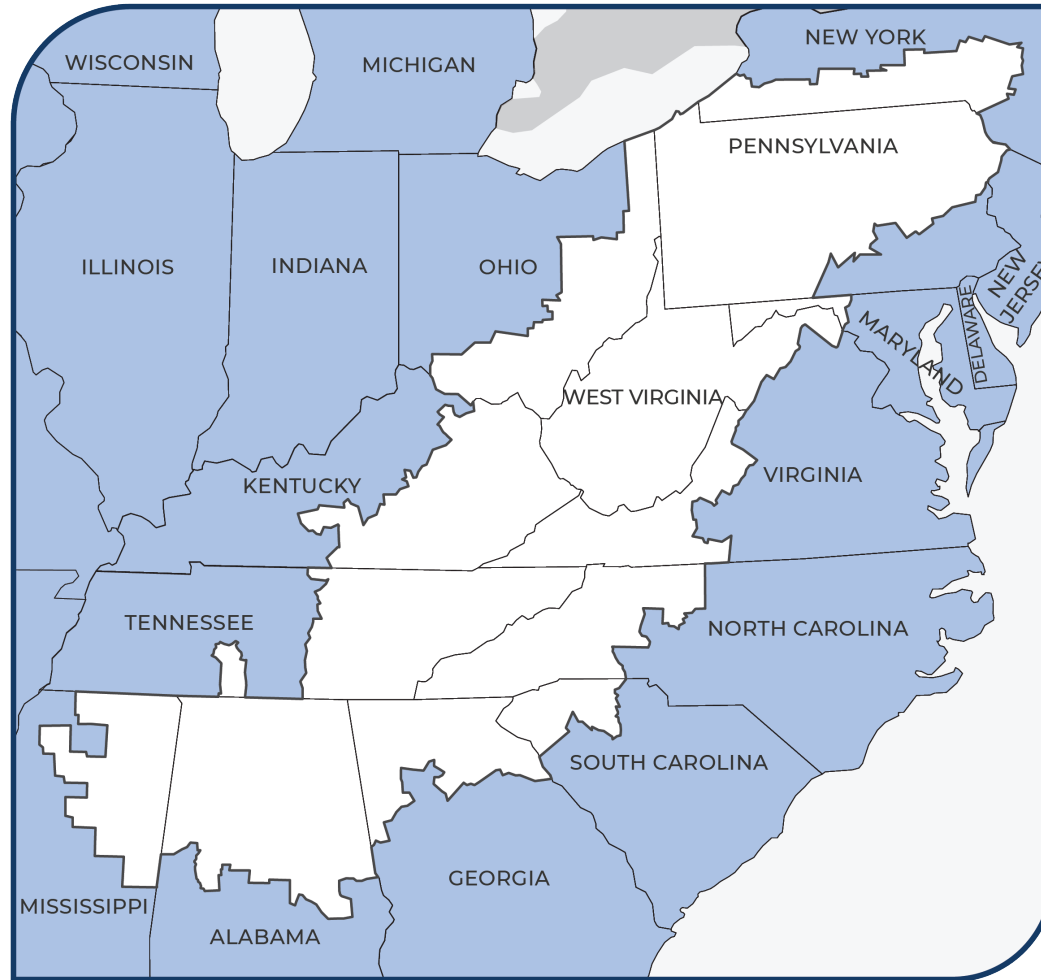
State

- State Co-Chair Representing State Interests
- State Governors/Alternates
- State Program Managers
- LDDs

Commission

- Executive Director
- Commission Staff

Appalachian Regional Commission



ARC invests and partners in the Appalachian Region to strengthen economic development and help the region reach its full economic potential.

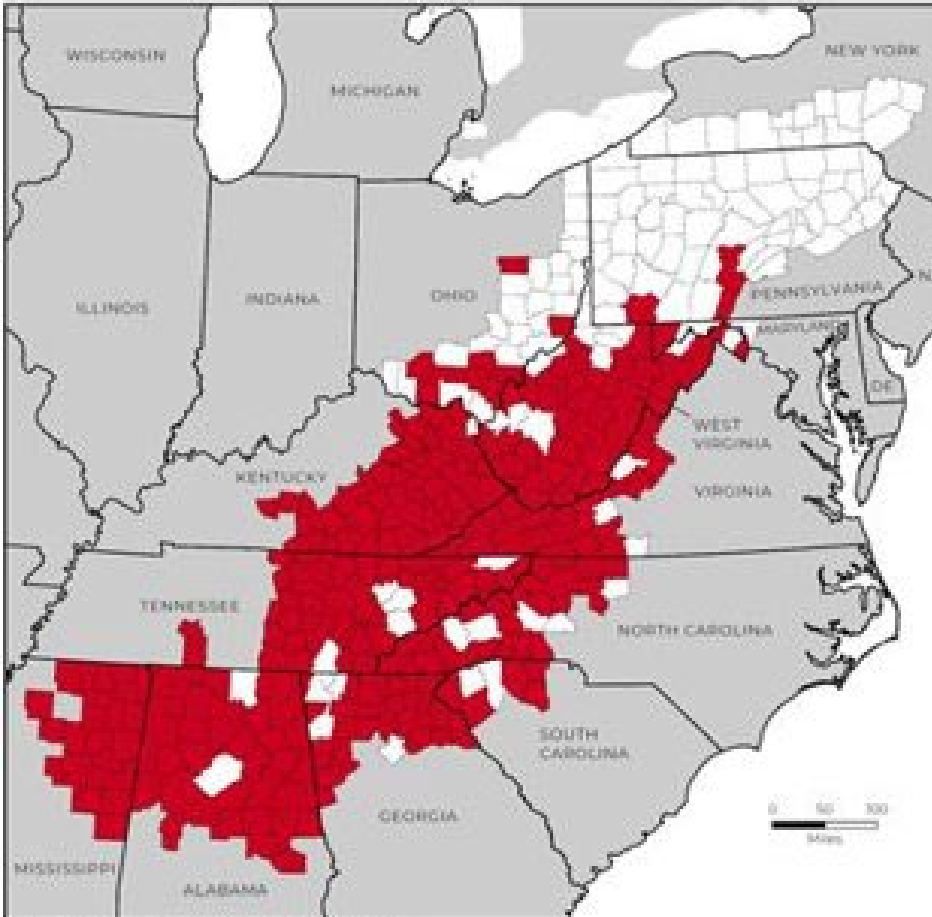


Appalachian
Regional
Commission

High-Poverty Counties in the Appalachian Region (Counties with Poverty Rates At Least 1.5 Times the U.S. Average)

1960

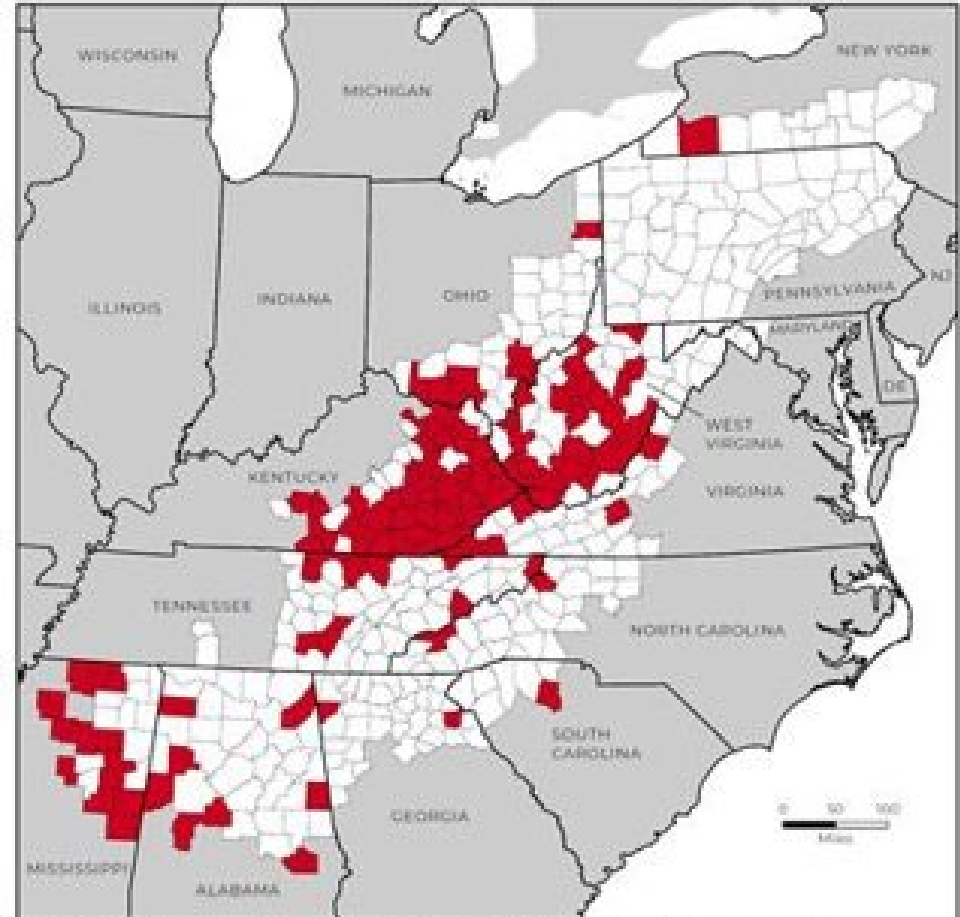
297 High-Poverty Counties



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1960 Census

2020-2024

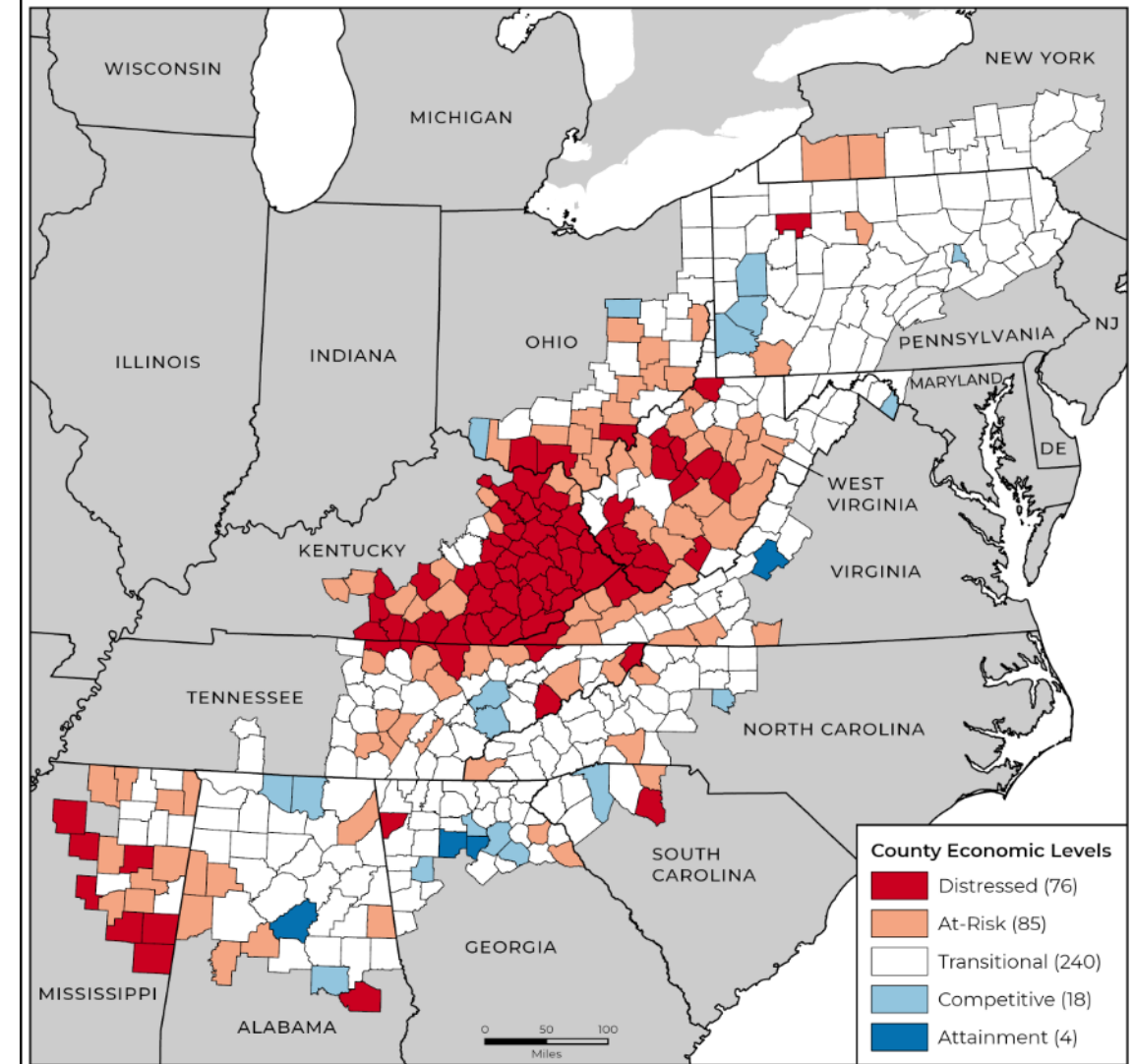
115 High-Poverty Counties



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2020-2024

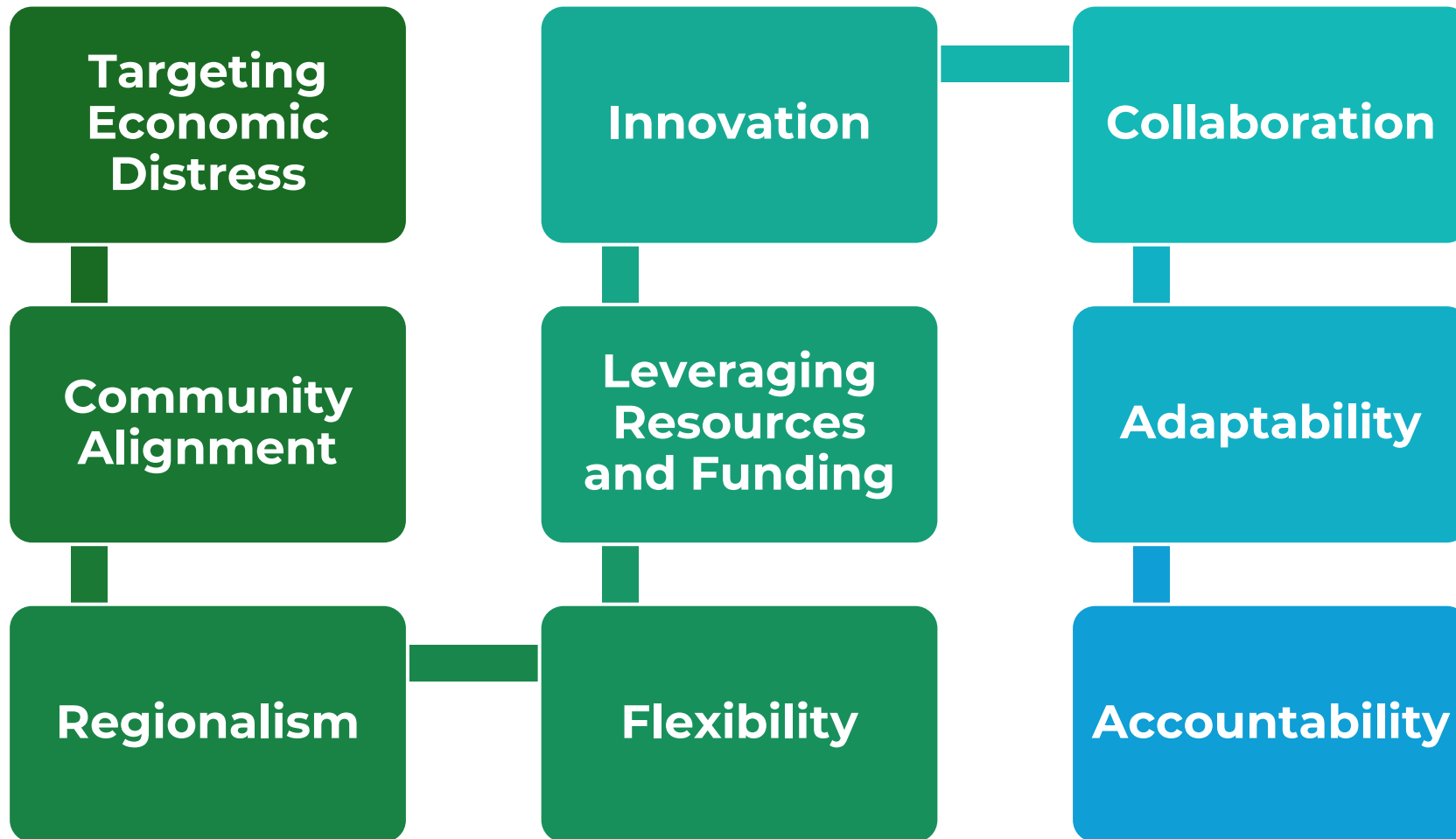
County Economic Status, FY 2027

- **Distressed:** The most economically depressed counties, ranking in the worst 10% of the nation's counties
- **At-risk:** Counties at risk of becoming distressed
- **Transitional:** Counties transitioning between at-risk and competitive status.
- **Competitive:** Counties able to compete in the national economy but don't rank in the highest 10% of the nation's counties.
- **Attainment:** The economically strongest counties, ranking in the best 10% of the nation's counties.



ARC Guiding Principles

ARC is committed to innovating, partnering, and investing in ways that accomplish the following:



ARC's Strategic Goals



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

ARC's Investment Priorities



Business Development



Workforce Development



Infrastructure



Tourism and Outdoor Recreation



Community Resources and Skill-Building

ARC Signature Grant Programs

ARC Signature Initiatives



Area Development Program

ARC's Area Development program empowers Appalachian communities to work with their state governments to design impactful projects that will strengthen infrastructure, businesses, the workforce and more.

arc.gov/grants-and-opportunities/area-development-program/

Contact your [SPM](#)

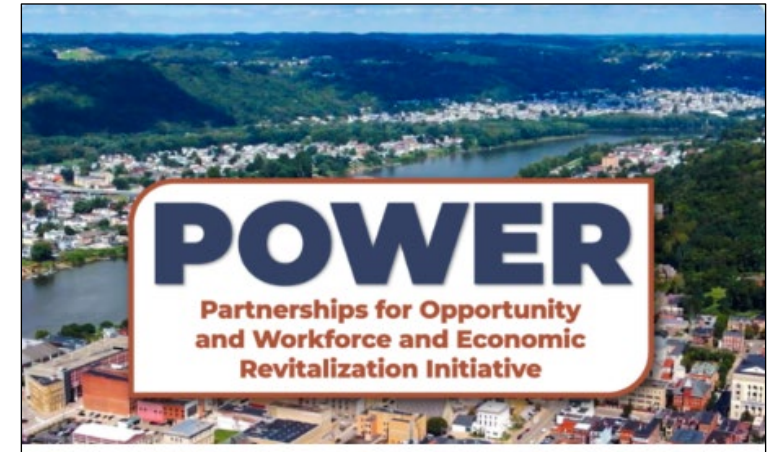


Investments Supporting Partnerships in Recovery Ecosystems Initiative

ARC's INSPIRE Initiative addresses the substance use disorder (SUD) crisis in Appalachia by creating or expanding recovery ecosystems that will lead to workforce entry or re-entry.

arc.gov/grants-and-opportunities/sud/

Contact: Sud@arc.gov



Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization Initiative

ARC's POWER Initiative targets federal resources to communities affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations and coal-related supply chain industries.

arc.gov/grants-and-opportunities/power/

Contact: Power@arc.gov

Area Development



- ARC's base program
- Formula-driven and State-led: Funding is allocated first to the states to support local investment priorities and to empower Appalachian communities
- Varied Funding Priorities, Timelines, Application Processes, and Award Caps
- Applicants must work with their State Program Managers in the development of their project and submission of their proposal



- Special program for coal communities
- \$65 million available in 2026
- Grants of up to \$2 million (\$2.5 million for broadband)
- Typical Application Cycle: Winter - Early Spring (delayed in FY2025)
- www.arc.gov/POWER



- Building and strengthening local recovery-to-work ecosystems
- \$13 million available in 2026
- Grants of up to \$500,000
- Typical Application Cycle: Winter- Early Spring
- www.arc.gov/INSPIRE

First NOSA released March 26, 2024

Eligible Activities: Natural Gas Energy Hub
Research; Hydrogen Energy Hub
Implementation

Research and Implementation Grants
Available

Award Cap: \$5 million

<https://www.arc.gov/energyhub/>



**Appalachian Regional Energy
Hub Initiative**

ARC Partner Programs

- Partnership with the Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Delta Regional Authority and the Northern Border Regional Commission
- WORC is a competitive workforce grant program funded and reviewed by DOL with no match requirement
- Funding targeted exclusively to entities within the ARC region
- ARC provides technical assistance post-award for WORC grantees in the region
- www.arc.gov/WORC



Basic Eligibility Requirements

Applicable to all ARC Grants

Eligible Grantees:

- Local development districts (LDDs)
- Indian Tribes
- States/local government
- Institutions of higher learning
- Nonprofits

Eligible Projects:

- Target counties within the Appalachian Region
- Advance and align with ARC/State goals for economic development
- Generate measurable impact

Federal Requirements and ARC Policy:

- Appalachian Regional Development Act (ARDA, 1965)
- ARC Code (including regulations on applicant match)
- Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 200 ("2 CFR Part 200")

Unique Entity ID (UEI)

- UEIs are required during initial stages of any ARC application (State pre-apps, competitive LOIs, etc.)
- Go to [SAM.Gov](https://sam.gov) to request or view your UEI
- To get a Unique Entity ID (UEI) number, go to the official [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) website. Select "Get Started" and choose whether you need a **full entity registration** or just a UEI for reporting purposes (sub-awardee).

SAM.GOV Account Activation and Registration

- Register at SAM.gov now or view your [your entity registration record](#).
- **Entity registrations expire annually and require annual renewal.** If your registration has expired, go [here](#) for instructions on how to renew your entity registration. Go [here](#) to learn about entity registration renewal extension.
- **If registration is not active or the organization is not registered at all, this will delay the award of the grant or payment processing significantly.**

SAM.Gov Entity Information

Active Registration?

Debt subject to **federal offset**?

Financial Assistance
Representation and Certification –
YES

Any other red flags ...

**Additional
Considerations**

Project Suitability

Measure Project Idea Against:

- ✓ **ARC Mission Alignment**
- ✓ **Goal Alignment**
- ✓ **Project Impact** (outputs/outcomes)
- ✓ **Other Considerations:**
 - Project-Specific Challenges
 - Administrative Priorities
 - "Shovel Ready" Projects
 - Open ARC Project w/ Overlapping Scope

Mission Alignment – X Check

Ask yourself...

- Who or what is in the service area?
- Does it make sense for ARC funds to support?
- What do you find if you Google the beneficiary?

For Example: Projects that serve **single businesses** or include **golf courses, yacht clubs, or gated communities do not align with ARC's mission** and are likely unsuitable for ARC funding

Goal Alignment - X Check

Take a quick look at
ARC's Strategic Plan and
State Development
Plans and Strategy
Statements.

Does your project help to build or strengthen:

- Appalachian businesses?
- Workforce system?
- Infrastructure?
- Culture and Tourism?
- Community Skills and Resources?

Check against our resources

ARC Strategic Plan:

<https://www.arc.gov/strategicplan/>

State Plans and Strategies:

<https://www.arc.gov/state-plans-strategies/>

Project Suitability? Check Against ARC's Guide to Performance Measures

Home / Grants and Opportunities / Applicant Resources / Guide to ARC Project Performance Measures

Guide to ARC Project Performance Measures

Applicant Resources Funding Opportunities and Resources Grantee Resource Guides and Manuals Video

All ARC projects must have documented performance measures. Applicants estimate their project's measures in project applications, and report on progress in interim and closeout reports. For detailed information about measuring performance for your project, click the link for your project type in the list below.

Measures may be outputs or outcomes. **Outputs** are the direct products of project activities and are frequently measured in terms of the volume of work accomplished. **Outcomes** are benefits or changes for individuals, communities, organizations, businesses, or other entities during or after the project's grant period. They are the measurable results or impact.

Every ARC implementation project should have at least one output measure and one outcome measure from ARC's catalog of measures. Planning projects must include, at a minimum, the output **plans/reports**. There are some output measures that have a direct correlation with an outcome measure—these are called **paired measures** and must be reported together. Paired measures demonstrate improvements experienced by individuals or entities served by an ARC-funded project, and are expressed as **served** and **improved** (e.g., students served, students improved). Other measures, called **standalone measures**, can be reported individually. Project proposals may include both paired and standalone measures when applicable.

- Working Backwards....
- Verify that your project's impact can be defined using ARC's performance measures
- Determine what measures might make the most sense and what kind of project they align with
- Allow this information to determine whether to pursue funding and to help guide the development of your application

Project Specific Challenges

Isolated activities that are not part of a comprehensive project (e.g., sidewalks and HVAC systems) may not be appropriate

Community recreation projects (e.g., skate parks, basketball courts, soccer fields as well as parks and playground equipment), **community enhancement projects** (e.g., memorials and public artwork), **social service projects** (e.g., senior living centers) tend to lack strong economic impact and will often be turned down.

ARC does not provide grants for municipal services/infrastructure (e.g., Courthouses or Fire Stations; county/city road paving or repair; paramedic equipment)

Other Considerations

ARC maintains alignment with the priorities of the current administration and will not approve projects that conflict with executive orders <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-orders/>

Projects should be "**shovel ready**", or fully developed and ready to go

Current or Previously Awarded Grantees: Proposed projects that **fully or partially duplicate or overlap with open or previously awarded ARC grants** will not be eligible

Pathways

Initial Registration in Pathways

pathways.arc.gov

New users without
an active
application or
project

New users applying
for a competitive
initiative

Direct link via email

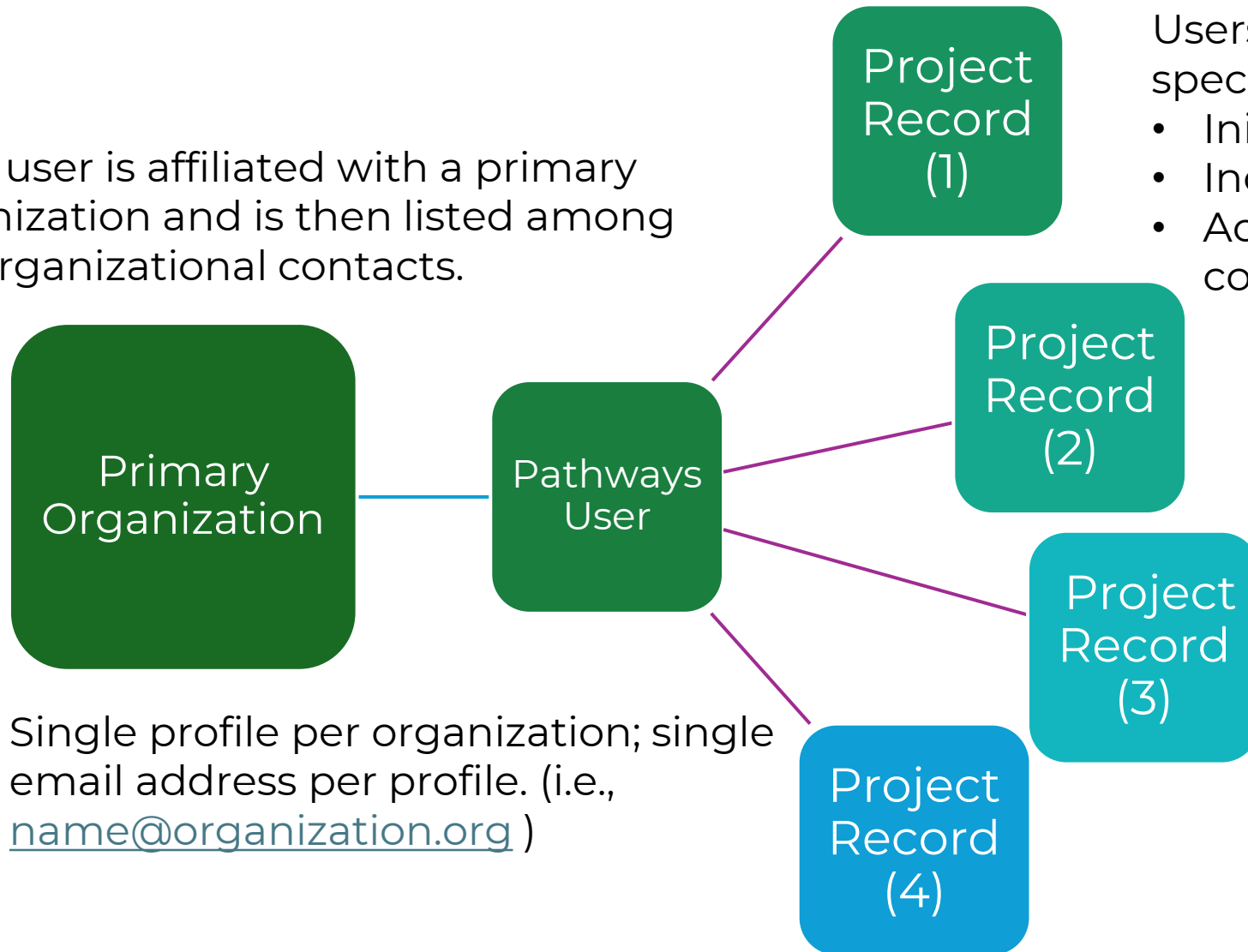
Connects recipient
to a specific
organization,
project or
application

Generated by state
request/submission
of pre-app,
invitation to
collaborate

- Registration connects you with an organization and provides you with an **active account**; registration does not (necessarily) give you access to view, edit, or administer projects or applications
- The only way to be named as an active contact on a project is by initiating an application or via a direct link (if listed on state spin-up or invited to collaborate)

*With few exceptions, you will only see the records of projects you have an active role in

Each user is affiliated with a primary organization and is then listed among the organizational contacts.



Users become connected to a specific project when:

- Initiating the application
- Included on a spin-up
- Accepting an invitation to collaborate

Single profile per organization; single email address per profile. (i.e., name@organization.org)

Request to Activate Sent to
Project Compliance

PC Checkpoint:

Existing Profile?
Single User Email Account?
Official Email Domain?
UEI?

Email Notification Sent to
Complete Profile, Set-Up
Password

What Makes a Strong Proposal

The "Economic Development Lens"

ARC places high-value on projects that wherein the correlation with **economic impact** is clear and made prominent.

All proposals are considered from the perspective of **economic development** and reviewed using this lens.

• Demonstrating Economic Impact

For example, a Theater Project (renovation/expansion):



- Emphasis on the arts, cultural enlightenment, historical significance, entertainment value (economic value is lost)



- Description of how many visitors the theater attracts, how that number stands to increase with the project, and how much revenue the visitors generate for downtown businesses
- "In the 2017-2018 season, a total of **17,315** individuals attended a ticketed performance in the theater generating approximately **\$500,000** in spending by patrons downtown. **With the proposed renovation and expansion, an additional 5,500 individuals...**"

Core Elements of ARC Projects

Strategic

- Project aligns with the goals of the community and regional plans

Impactful

- Project has specific performance targets aimed at helping Appalachia economically prosper

Collaborative

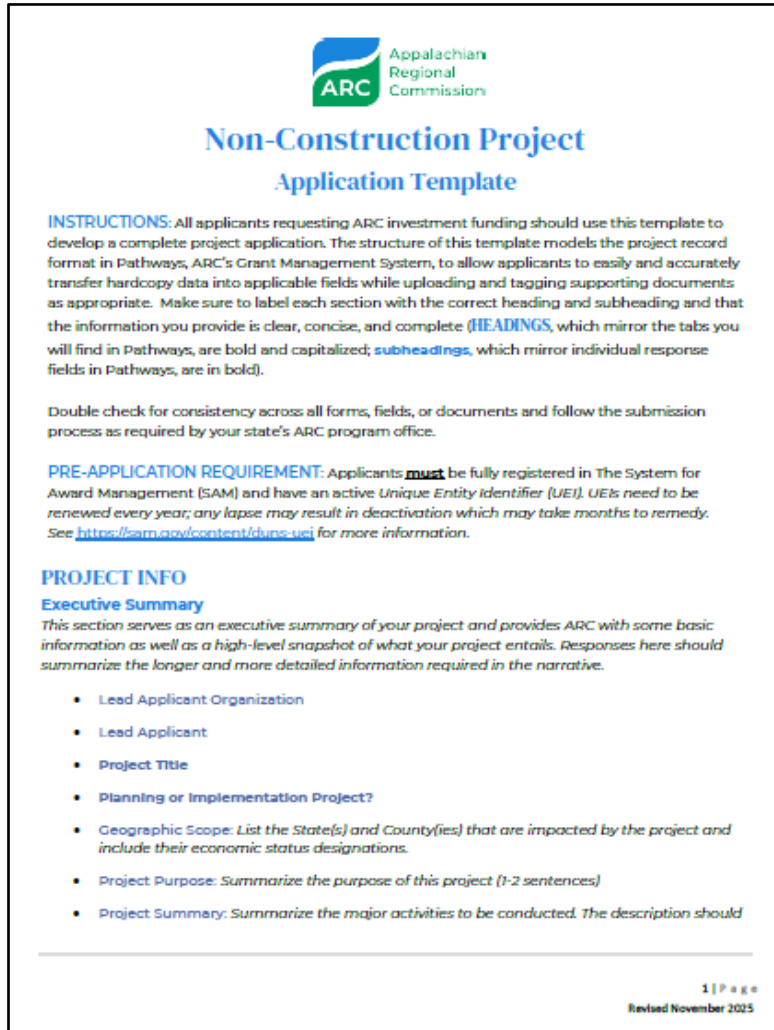
- Project engages partnerships to achieve common or aligned goals

Sustainable

- Project has a plan for maintaining the program or asset after the grant period has ended

How to Ensure Complete and Comprehensive Application Packages

Tip #1: Use ARC's Application Template!



The screenshot shows the top portion of a document titled "Non-Construction Project Application Template". At the top left is the ARC logo (Appalachian Regional Commission). Below the title, there are sections for "INSTRUCTIONS", "PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT", and "PROJECT INFO". The "PROJECT INFO" section includes a sub-header "Executive Summary" and a list of bullet points for required information. At the bottom right of the page, it says "1 | Page" and "Revised November 2025".

ARC Appalachian Regional Commission

Non-Construction Project Application Template

INSTRUCTIONS: All applicants requesting ARC investment funding should use this template to develop a complete project application. The structure of this template models the project record format in Pathways, ARC's Grant Management System, to allow applicants to easily and accurately transfer hardcopy data into applicable fields while uploading and tagging supporting documents as appropriate. Make sure to label each section with the correct heading and subheading and that the information you provide is clear, concise, and complete (**HEADINGS**, which mirror the tabs you will find in Pathways, are bold and capitalized; **subheadings**, which mirror individual response fields in Pathways, are in bold).

Double check for consistency across all forms, fields, or documents and follow the submission process as required by your state's ARC program office.

PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENT: Applicants **must** be fully registered in The System for Award Management (SAM) and have an active Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). UEIs need to be renewed every year; any lapse may result in deactivation which may take months to remedy. See <https://sam.gov/content/cluns-uei> for more information.

PROJECT INFO

Executive Summary

This section serves as an executive summary of your project and provides ARC with some basic information as well as a high-level snapshot of what your project entails. Responses here should summarize the longer and more detailed information required in the narrative.

- Lead Applicant Organization
- Lead Applicant
- Project Title
- Planning or Implementation Project?
- Geographic Scope: List the State(s) and County(ies) that are impacted by the project and include their economic status designations.
- Project Purpose: Summarize the purpose of this project (1-2 sentences)
- Project Summary: Summarize the major activities to be conducted. The description should

1 | Page
Revised November 2025

- Includes all required components of a full application package, reducing likelihood of omission or error
- Provides guidance and links to helpful resources
- Specifies the kind of supportive documentation you need
- Is formatted to align with the Pathways structure

Find here



Keep in mind:

Whether created directly in the system or transferred later, **ALL applications end up in Pathways** prior to a full review and approval by ARC.

Following the ARC Application **templates as written** will allow you time to **prepare and supports the seamless transfer of data** from one source (e.g., Word) to Pathways.

The screenshot displays the 'Pathways Grant Management Portal' interface. On the left is a green sidebar with navigation links: 'Main', 'Notes', and 'Invite Collaborator(s) 1'. The main content area is titled 'Applicant Home' and shows the application ID 'Area_2024_00000562 - Laura's Construction Application - 8/11/25'. Below the title is an 'Instructions' section with a link to 'Area Development'. A horizontal menu lists various tabs: 'PROJECT INFO', 'APPLICANT INFO', 'PROJECT CLASSIFICATION', 'FINANCIAL', 'NARRATIVE', 'BROADBAND', 'ATTACHMENTS', 'ASSURANCES', 'AFFA', and 'SYSTEM-GENERATED EMAILS'. The 'PROJECT INFO' tab is active, showing fields for 'Status' (Full Application Draft), 'Lead Applicant Organization' (Appalachian Regional Commission), a confirmation question with 'Yes' and 'No' radio buttons, 'Lead Applicant' (Elijah Biggs), 'Project Title' (Laura's Construction Application - 8/11/25), 'Project Type' (Implementation), 'Implementation Type' (Construction), and 'Administering Agency' (-Select One-).

Tip #2: Remember the Four "C's" of a Solid Application

Clear

Concise

Comprehensive

Consistent

Clear

- Answer the questions for each section's heading
- Avoid use of **industry jargon** and **abbreviations**

Concise

- Rely on **statistics and other data points** to craft your narrative; **avoid "fluff"**
- **Avoid lengthy/irrelevant attachments** (e.g. 60-pg Strategic Plan)

Comprehensive

- The application should **include everything required** in the templates/noted in Pathways (this includes all necessary attachments!)
- Narrative should describe all components of the project

Consistent

- Information and numbers should be **consistent across all sections of the application and attachments**

Tip #3: Use Available Resources!

- ARC's website has a lot of great tools, information, and resources, many of which will help you in the development of your proposal.
- [Applicant Resources](#): Forms, videos, guidance documents
- [Grantee Resources](#): Forms, guidance, manuals
- [Investment Priorities](#): ARC goals, project highlights, "investments in action"
- [Research Reports](#): Data, statistical research
- [State Specific Information](#): Counties, contact information, development plans and strategy statements

Supplementary Guidance based on Project Type

- Follow this link to find more information how to develop stronger applications according to the type of project you are proposing. Within each document, you will find:
- Project examples
- How to incorporate key ARC principles into your proposal
- Helpful resources
- Other considerations

Downtown Revitalization Projects

This document provides specific guidance for **downtown revitalization projects**, per ARC's Strategic Plan Goal 4.1. Applications may involve multiple activities as part of a single project. ARC encourages applicants to review the specific guidance for each type of activity included in an application.

All application guidance is grounded in the goals and principles of [ARC's current strategic plan](#), which emphasize strategic focus, collaboration, sustainability and measurable impact in ARC investments.

Downtown revitalization projects can include planning streetscape improvements, creating new signage, renovating historic buildings, and creating new programming. Ultimately, projects aligned with this goal should support the businesses, residents and visitors in the target downtown area and should emphasize economic development in its benefits, rationale, and performance measures.

ARC categorizes downtowns as a tourism and cultural asset of a community and invests in **downtown revitalization projects** under Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan; however, components of downtown revitalization projects may fall under other goals.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Downtown revitalization plan that analyzes the economic, geographic, transportation and aesthetic conditions of a community's downtown, including action items to guide community implementation efforts
- Gateway plans to explore the potential for linking a community's economic core and an adjacent institution, public land or other significant assets such as colleges or universities, recreational resource or historic entertainment venue
- Restoration of a historic theatre or upgrade to a public space for outdoor markets with the goal of bringing more foot traffic to the downtown business district. Note: Any space improved with ARC funds must remain under public ownership.
- Streetscape improvement program, which often includes water and sewer and is centered on a community-based planning effort, with goals that primarily include improving safety and aesthetics, while also providing direct benefit to businesses.
- Business Development Program (i.e. training) that downtown business owners and their staff can participate in.

ARC's Policy for the Development of Travel and Tourism Projects

ARC will support activities as they relate to the travel and tourism industry in the context of an overall development strategy. Grant proposals to use ARC funds for capital improvement or **construction** related to travel and tourism must meet both of the following criteria:

- A. Be an integral part of a **strategic plan** for the community and/or region, **and**
- B. Meet the highest standards of a **cost-benefit analysis and/or feasibility study** as to economic outcomes.

Please refer to ARC's Guidance on Documentation for Travel and Tourism Construction Projects, <https://www.arc.gov/resource/guidance-on-documentation-travel-and-tourism-for-construction-projects/>, as well as ARC's Project Guidelines, <https://www.arc.gov/resource/arc-project-guidelines/>, for more information.

Key Principles of ARC Downtown Revitalization Investments

As outlined in ARC's strategic plan, project activities should be strategic, sustainable, collaborative, and impactful.

Strategic:

- Identify the conditions that create a need for the project. Demonstrate the opportunity for positive change to result from the project. Employ research and explore marketing strategies to optimize the project's economic impact.

Sustainable:

More Information

For general guidance on how to develop a complete and competitive application for ARC project funding, all applicants should refer to the application framework and instructions detailed in the [Checklist for ARC Non-Construction Project Applications](#) form or the [Checklist for ARC Construction Project Applications](#) form, as appropriate, available in the applicant resources section of our website.

Applicants should also consult their ARC State Program Manager*, their state's Appalachian Development Plan* and Annual Strategy Statement* for additional information.

*This information can be found [here](#).



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION | 1/2025

<https://www.arc.gov/resource/application-guidance-by-project-type/>

Project Highlights



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

City of Tallapoosa Downtown Master Plan

- **Grantee:** City of Tallapoosa, GA
- **Amount:** \$40,000
- **Scope of Work:** The City of Tallapoosa is developing a downtown master plan to direct growth, investment, and tourism over the next 5-10 years, while also enhancing Tallapoosa's historic character and unique identity. The City's goals are to bolster the downtown economy with retail, restaurants and mixed-use development based on market understanding, development potential, and best management policies and procedures.



Wheeling Food Hub Operations Project

Grantee: Grow Ohio Valley, Inc.

Location: Wheeling, WV

Grant Amount: \$736,943.00

Scope of Work: The overarching mission of Grow Ohio Valley (GOV) is to strengthen and expand revenues for farmers and food entrepreneurs selling fresh and value-added products. To do this, GOV works at every level of its local food system, from farms to markets. The Wheeling Food Hub Operations Project will involve Grow Ohio Valley leveraging its renovated warehouse property (134 17th Street, Wheeling, WV) to provide local food entrepreneurs with the tools, guidance, and business development support services to scale-up their production of packaged, shelf-stable products to be distributed in larger markets.



Sneedville Automatic Meter Reading System

Grantee: Sneedville Utility District

Location: Hancock County, TN

Grant Amount: \$236,000

Scope of Work: Replace existing water meters with automatic read meters throughout its service area. Associated software and training was also provided as part of this project to allow Utility workers to read and service the meters. The meters will record up to a 90-day data profile showing usage trends allowing for better leak detection and increased transparency for the customer. Data from the meters will transmit at broadband-level speed and be captured by a portable receiver.



Kentucky River Community Care: Building Bridges to Long-Term Recovery



Grantee: Kentucky River Community Care

Location: Kentucky

Grant Amount: \$500,000

Scope of Work: Bridges to Work is a 36-month pilot community partnership that will establish an ecosystem of care that blends therapeutic counseling, workforce development, job training, work-based learning and recovery services to create a unified pathway to employment success. The program will support reentering or court-involved males ages 18-34 in Knott and Perry Counties, two distressed counties in Appalachian Kentucky. Funding will create a holistic recovery program designed by participants, local businesses and second chance employers who support the development of transformative work environments welcoming people in recovery back to the workforce.

Keith-Albee Theater Renovations

- **Grantee:** Huntington, WV
- **Amount:** \$1,500,000 (POWER)
- **Scope of Work:** The Keith-Albee Theater renovations preserved the historic venue and allowed the performing arts center to expand its programming.
- Renovations were completed in 2025 and the theater is expected to bring more than 140,000 visitors to downtown Huntington in the next three years, which will in turn have a positive impact on downtown businesses, restaurants and lodging facilities.



Navigating ARC's Website (Walkthrough)

Please Take Our Survey!



[https://forms.office.com/g/mNEZ
UsKAtj](https://forms.office.com/g/mNEZUsKAtj)

Connect with ARC



twitter.com/ARCgov



facebook.com/ARC.gov



instagram.com/ARCgov



linkedin.com/company/appalachian-regional-commission



In the Region

arc.gov/newsletter-signup