



PARTNERSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION (POWER) INITIATIVE

ARC POWER INITIATIVE

www.arc.gov/POWER

Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative: Federal Fiscal Year 2020—Request for Proposals (RFP) for Project Grants

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RFP release date: December 9, 2019

Application portal opens: January 13, 2020

Letter of intent due: February 28, 2020 at 5:00 PM (ET)

Proposal due date: **April 24, 2020 at 5:00 PM (ET)**

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is publishing this request for proposals (RFP) to solicit applications for grants under the Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative for federal fiscal year 2020 (FY20) funding.

The POWER Initiative makes available federal resources to help communities and regions that have been affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal-related supply chain industries due to the changing economics of America's energy production.

POWER supports efforts to create a more vibrant economic future for coal-impacted communities by cultivating economic diversity, enhancing job training and re-employment opportunities, creating jobs in existing or new industries, and attracting new sources of investment.

This RFP provides a general overview of the POWER Initiative, as well as the specific requirements needed to complete a POWER FY20 grant application.

Additional background information on the POWER Initiative and a complete list of projects that have been funded under this effort is available at www.arc.gov/POWER.

A. ARC Overview -----	3
B. POWER FY20 Program Description -----	3
1. POWER Initiative Overview	
1.1 Available Funding	
1.2 Deadlines and Procedures	
2. POWER FY20 Grant Types	
2.1 POWER FY20 Implementation Grants	
2.2 POWER FY20 Technical Assistance Grants	
C. POWER Goals, Priorities, and Funding Principles -----	5
1. Background on ARC's Strategic Investment Goals	
2. POWER Investment Priorities	
2.1 Building a Competitive Workforce	
2.2 Fostering Entrepreneurial Activities	
2.3 Developing Industry Clusters in Communities	
2.4 Strengthening Substance Abuse Response	
2.5 Broadband	
3. POWER Funding Principles	
4. Opportunity Zones	
D. POWER FY20 Award Information -----	10
1. Availability of Funding	
E. POWER FY20 Eligibility Information -----	11
1. Coal-Impacted Communities: Documentation of Economic Impact	
2. Eligible Applicants	
3. Cost Sharing or Matching	
4. Project Team Composition	
F. POWER FY20 Application and Submission Information -----	14
1. Request a POWER FY20 Application	
2. Content and Form of POWER FY20 Application	
3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)	
4. Submission Dates and Times	
5. Application Submission Instructions	
6. Funding Restrictions	
G. POWER FY20 Application Review Information -----	16
H. POWER FY20 Award Administration -----	16
I. ARC Agency Contact Information -----	17
J. General Disclosures -----	17

A. ARC OVERVIEW

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a regional economic development agency that represents a partnership of federal, state, and local government. Established by an act of Congress in 1965 through the Appalachian Regional Development Act 40 U.S.C. § 14101-14704 (ARDA), ARC is composed of the governors of the 13 Appalachian states and a federal co-chair, who is appointed by the president of the United States. Local participation is also provided through multi-county local development districts. ARC serves a 205,000-square-mile region of 25 million people that includes all of West Virginia and parts of twelve other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.¹

B. POWER FY20 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1) POWER Initiative Overview

The Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative makes available federal resources to help communities and regions affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal-related supply chain industries due to the changing economics of America's energy production and the coal economy.² POWER supports efforts to create a more vibrant economic future for coal-impacted communities by cultivating economic diversity, enhancing job training and re-employment opportunities, creating jobs in existing or new industries, and attracting new sources of investment.

For coal-impacted communities to diversify their local and regional economies successfully, POWER prioritizes targeting federal resources to projects and activities that:

- Will produce multiple economic development outcomes, such as:
 - diversifying the commercial and industrial bases of local and regional economies;
 - creating high-quality, well-paying jobs in new and/or existing industries;
 - attracting new sources of job-creating investment (both public and private); and
 - providing a range of workforce services and skills training, including paid work-based learning opportunities, resulting in industry-recognized credentials for high-quality, in-demand jobs.
- Are specifically identified under state, local, and/or regional economic development plans; and
- Have been collaboratively designed by diverse state, local, and regional stakeholders.

POWER seeks to align and leverage complementary federal, state, and other economic development resources that provide assistance through competitively awarded grants to

¹ A map of the ARC Region can be found at www.arc.gov/POWER.

² The “coal economy” is a term that reflects the complete supply chain of coal-reliant industries. This includes but is not limited to coal mining and coal-fired power plants, along with related transportation, logistics, and supply chain manufacturing.

partnerships anchored in coal- impacted communities. By aligning and leveraging multiple resources (federal, state, local, non-profit, and private sector), POWER solicits and prioritizes the selection of projects that integrate multiple economic development systems and resources in support of implementing existing economic development strategic plans.

1.1 Funding Available

It is expected that POWER for federal fiscal year 2020 (FY20) will have approximately \$48 million available pending congressional appropriations. Up to one-third of appropriated funding will be available to fund broadband deployment projects.

POWER FY20 funding will continue to target coal-impacted communities. Proposed projects should demonstrate that communities they propose to serve have direct or indirect coal-impacts as a threshold criterion for POWER funding consideration.

1.2 Deadlines and Procedures

Letter of intent due: February 28, 2020 at 5:00 PM (ET)

Final application due date: April 24, 2020 at 5:00 PM (ET)

Applicants are required to submit a one-page letter of intent (LOI) in PDF format to POWER@arc.gov by February 28, 2020. An LOI is required for both implementation applications and technical assistance applications. The LOI template will be available at www.power.arc.gov when the application portal opens January 13, 2020.

Briefly identify contact details and describe the scope of the proposed project, key partners, geographic scope, and funding request amount. Once receipt of the LOI is confirmed, it will be forwarded to the ARC state program managers of each state impacted by the proposal, and the applicant will be given a code that will allow them to fully submit their application in the POWER application portal.

Submitted applications for POWER FY20 funding that substantially differ from the information included on the received LOI will be disqualified during the review process.

NOTE: Previously submitted POWER applications that were not selected for funding must be resubmitted to receive consideration for POWER FY20 funds.

Prior to submission of the final application, every applicant is required to contact the state program managers of the states impacted by the project proposal. The state officials will ensure that the proposals are in alignment with their state Appalachian economic development priorities. See <http://www.arc.gov/about/StateProgramManagers.asp> for the complete list.

NOTE: Submission of the LOI does not replace or satisfy the requirement that applicants must contact the appropriate state program managers.

In addition to the requirements described in this RFP and online at www.arc.gov/POWER, all applications must also meet the general requirements for ARC funding and be consistent with ARC's strategic plan, [Investing in Appalachia's Future: ARC's Five-Year Strategic Plan for Capitalizing on Appalachia's Opportunities 2016–2020](#).

2) POWER FY20 Grant Types

2.1 Implementation Grants

ARC expects to make individual implementation awards in amounts between \$400,000 and \$1.5 million for each project it awards within the congressionally-defined Appalachian Region (with exceptions for broadband deployment projects, which go up to \$2.5 million). Specific award guidelines may vary by type of project.

Applicants can determine the required time period necessary to meet the objectives of their projects. The period of performance for awards under POWER FY20 may be up to three years if warranted by the size and scope of the project.

2.2 Technical Assistance Grants

In addition to POWER implementation grants, applications for technical assistance (TA) grants up to \$50,000 are available in FY20 to assist coal-impacted communities and regions in developing plans and strategies for transforming the structure of their local economies. The period of performance for technical assistance grants typically runs for 12 months.

Technical assistance grants are also particularly helpful when planning POWER implementation projects that cross standard jurisdictional boundaries, like state lines. Technical assistance grant applicants should not assume that POWER funding will be available for implementation of the plans and strategies developed. POWER TA applicants should be prepared to identify other potential sources of federal, state, local, or private sector funding.

C. POWER Goals, Priorities, and Funding Principles

This section contains information describing the POWER FY20 goals, priorities, and funding principles. Potential applicants should review this information carefully before submitting a proposal.

1. ARC's Strategic Investment Goals

As described in ARC's strategic plan, *Investing in Appalachia's Future*, the Commission has identified five investment goals to advance its vision and mission and to guide its work through FY20. These goals reflect consensus among local, state, and federal partners on the most critical investment opportunities in Appalachia. While the investment goals are distinct, they are also interdependent, with progress on one goal often requiring investment in another. All applications must address one or more of these goals:

Goal 1: Economic Opportunities: Invest in entrepreneurial and business development strategies that strengthen Appalachia's economy.

Goal 2: Ready Workforce: Improve the education, knowledge, skills, and health of residents to work and succeed in Appalachia.

Goal 3: Critical Infrastructure: Invest in critical infrastructure, especially broadband; transportation, including the Appalachian Development Highway System; and water/wastewater systems.

Goal 4: Natural and Cultural Assets: Strengthen Appalachia's community and economic development potential by leveraging the Region's natural and cultural heritage assets.

Goal 5: Leadership and Community Capacity: Build the capacity and skills of current and next-generation leaders and organizations to innovate, collaborate, and advance community and economic development.

2. POWER Investment Priorities

As adopted by the Commission, the POWER investment priorities build upon ARC's strategic investment goals. The focus of ARC's POWER Initiative for FY20 will remain on investments that are regional, strategic, and transformational and that maximize the economic revitalization of coal-impacted communities and regions.

Project ideas that do not fit the following list of POWER investment priorities may be considered for funding, but all applications will be reviewed on their ability to address at least one of these priority areas.

2.1 Building a Competitive Workforce

- Projects investing in workforce training should stress the potential for **upward mobility** for the participants. This can be accomplished through upskilling and establishing clear, defined career pathways in training programs that accommodate continued growth.
- Workforce projects should aim to **increase labor participation rates** by not only targeting underemployed workers, but recruiting and training people who have opted out of the workforce.
- Proposals for training programs should be supported with evidence that indicates a demand for that particular skillset in the area to be served. Evidence can include letters from local businesses and business groups expressing a need or labor market analyses conducted by federal or state sources.

2.2 Fostering Entrepreneurial Activities

- **Impact investment funds.** Impact investments are made with the intent of generating a measurable social or environmental return as well as a financial return. Proposed POWER projects that leverage private impact investment fund support are encouraged to apply for POWER funding.

- For more guidance on development finance projects, please see the supplemental guidance linked under the Resources section on the ARC POWER page at www.arc.gov/POWER.
- **Creation, support, and growth of entrepreneurial ecosystems.** ARC research has identified several key components of strong entrepreneurial ecosystems: market access, capital, talent, business assistance, infrastructure, and culture/community leadership. Projects should target and strengthen multiple components in a region. ARC's research can be found at www.arc.gov/ecosystems.
- **Development and deployment of entrepreneurship education programs** that seek to lay the groundwork for a shift in a region's entrepreneurial culture, especially those that work in concert with science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) initiatives.
- **Invest in a region's natural and cultural assets** and creative enterprises through activities that increase entrepreneurship. Project activities in this area should be integral to a region's overall economic development strategy and result in realistic, measurable economic benefits.

2.3 Developing Industry Clusters in Communities

- **Supporting small manufacturing companies for product and market diversification and expansion.** Project activities in this area should be designed to help communities cultivate an environment where new and existing manufacturers create well-paying jobs through increased private investment and acceleration of the resurgence of manufacturing. Examples include but are not limited to supply chain improvements, bringing connectivity and interoperability to the factory floor, export assistance, energy efficiency improvements, and improved access to capital for the Region's small and mid-sized manufacturers.
- Bolstering entrepreneurial, technical, academic, and scientific talent that **support the creation of strategic industry clusters**, such as healthcare or wood products, which yield high-quality businesses and jobs.

2.4 Strengthening Substance Abuse Response

- Projects that address the substance abuse crisis should focus on creating a **recovery ecosystem** that will lead to **workforce re-entry**. Projects are encouraged to support the **post-treatment to employment continuum**, which could include investments in healthcare networks that support substance abuse recovery professionals, recovery-focused job training programs, as well as initiatives designed to coordinate, or link, recovery services and training that support the recovery ecosystem.
 - The **recovery ecosystem**, within the context of building and strengthening economically resilient communities in Appalachia, is a complex linkage of multiple sectors, including but not limited to recovery communities, peer support, health, human services, faith communities, criminal justice, public safety, housing, transportation, education, and employers, designed to help individuals in recovery access the support services and training they need to maintain recovery and successfully obtain sustainable employment.

- Initiate or expand programs designed to eliminate or reduce the harm to the workforce and economic growth of the region that results from such abuse; attract and retain relevant health care services, businesses, and workers.

2.5 Broadband

Up to one-third of funds provided for the POWER FY20 program will be available to fund broadband deployment projects that enhance access to broadband services, which is a critical infrastructure component needed by all segments of the community: for business development; job creation; health care services, including telemedicine; and to help rural areas compete with more densely populated areas.

Understanding that broadband deployment projects can be capital intensive, grant requests for deployment projects can be up to \$2.5 million, with priority given to projects with evidence of leveraged funding for the overall project. **To qualify for broadband deployment funding, at least 65% of the project's budget must be directed to the actual deployment of broadband infrastructure. Projects whose budgets direct more than 35% of their funds toward activities not directly associated with deployment of broadband infrastructure will follow the same guidelines as implementation projects.**

For more guidance on broadband projects, please find "Supplemental Guidance for Broadband" in the Resources section at www.arc.gov/power.

3. POWER Funding Principles

Applications for POWER Initiative funding are strongly encouraged to have a regional and/or multi-state focus supported by state and local planning, be large in scale, and be targeted to economic restructuring. The applications should show evidence of collaboration and leverage. In order to maximize the impact of ARC investments on the economic transition in coal-impacted communities, ARC will review proposals under this RFP that successfully address the following factors:

Large-scale projects: To maximize impact and minimize administration costs, projects should be large in scope with budgets that match their scale. POWER implementation grants will range from at least \$400,000 to \$1.5 million (excepting broadband deployment projects, which have a maximum grant of \$2.5 million). Targeted areas should be regional, defined minimally as multi-county, with potential investment amounts scaled upward as the size and complexity of the region increases to include multi-state areas.

Include assessment and planning: Communities receiving money for activities should have a well-articulated analysis of why and how the local and regional economy has been negatively impacted by the downturn in the coal industry and demonstrate how the proposed effort adds value to a larger, more long-term vision and action plan being implemented in the Region. The project idea should build upon existing regional priorities such as Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS).

Market analysis: Applicants should describe how their proposal meets an unmet need, is a complement to existing initiatives (if applicable), and is not duplicative of any ongoing efforts in the project area. Survey work should directly show end-user participation needs.

Targeted to economic and community restructuring: Applicants must have assessed their assets and opportunities and have formulated a plan that focuses on restructuring the economy (e.g., sector strategies, entrepreneurial development) and identifies both short-term (1–2 years) and long-term (3 years and beyond) anticipated outcomes.

Collaborative: POWER FY20 funds are intended to help leverage program funds from multiple sources (both public and private). Project proposals should have multiple stakeholders engaged in project implementation from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors, and from multiple disciplines; there should be evidence of strong input and engagement of the broader community in planning and project design as well as a clear understanding of each partner's role in the proposed project.

Evidence of leverage: Investments should demonstrate community and regional commitment to the proposed project by combining ARC resources with other public, private, and philanthropic resources. Resources listed as matches must be accessible within 60 days of the contract date. More details on match requirements can be found in Section E.3 of this RFP.

Sustainability: Applicants should directly address the sustainability of the proposed project through robust planning and a stated commitment to sustaining the project's efforts beyond ARC's investment.

Organizational capacity: Applicants should demonstrate their—and their project partners'—ability to undertake/accomplish the proposed scope of work including, but not limited to, the project partners' qualifications and experience managing sizable and complex grants and federal awards, and whether or not significant administrative hiring is required for implementation of the proposed scope of work.

Return on investment: Applicants should define specific output and outcome measures, demonstrate how the project is designed to achieve those outcomes, and commit to capturing and sharing those measures over the life of the investment. Given the urgency in addressing needs in coal-impacted communities and regions, anticipated outcomes for both the short- and long-term should be clearly articulated. Proposed POWER Initiative projects should include one of more of the following as their primary outcomes:

- **Jobs created:** New, high-quality, well-paying jobs that did not exist in the locale prior to the activity.
- **Jobs obtained:** Workers are assisted in securing employment in existing high-quality jobs; may involve training and other services.

- **Businesses created:** Any new business started in the locale, both those started by local entrepreneurs and start-ups and new facilities located in the community by existing businesses.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply the POWER FY20 goals, priorities, and funding principles creatively and vigorously to their proposed projects. Applicants should also contact ARC state program managers and ARC program staff for specific guidance pertaining to the eligible use of POWER funds.

4. Opportunity Zones

Projects will receive special consideration in the review process if they propose to leverage their POWER award in qualified Opportunity Zones to:

- Improve the efficacy of community college, career and technical education, and workforce development programs physically located within a qualified Opportunity Zone that better prepare workers in distressed communities for jobs.
- Provide basic financial and capacity-building tools to attract private investment directly to a qualified Opportunity Zone.
- Stimulate access to private capital, and promote programs located in qualified Opportunity Zones that assist entrepreneurs.
- Develop broadband deployment projects in qualified Opportunity Zones that enhance access to and the use of broadband services.
- Combat drug addiction and the opioid crisis.

For more information on Opportunity Zones in Appalachia, please visit the following link: www.arc.gov/opportunityzonesinappalachia.asp. Applications should include a list of qualified Opportunity Zones that will be covered by the proposal.

Applicants should apply the POWER FY20 goals, priorities, and funding principles to their proposed projects. Applicants should also contact ARC state program managers and ARC program staff for specific guidance pertaining to the eligible use of POWER funds.

D. POWER FY20 AWARD INFORMATION

1. Availability of Funding

POWER FY20 expects to have approximately \$48 million available pending congressional appropriations. Of that total, up to one-third of funds available under this RFP will be available to fund broadband deployment projects.

ARC expects to make individual implementation awards in amounts between \$400,000 and \$1.5 million for each project it awards within the congressionally-defined Appalachian Region (with exceptions for broadband deployment projects, which have a maximum award of \$2.5 million). Specific award guidelines may vary by type of project.

ARC reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with the applicants that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove or adjust certain proposed costs.

Please include expenses in the budget for in-person POWER convenings, held annually, where grantees will learn project management best practices, connect with ARC staff, network with fellow grantees, and explore opportunities for collaboration.³

ARC will not be held responsible for proposal or application preparation costs. Publication of this RFP does not obligate ARC to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds.

E. POWER FY20 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Coal-Impacted Communities: Documentation of Economic Impact

Eligible POWER projects must be located within and targeted to communities or regions that have been recently impacted, or can reasonably demonstrate that they will be impacted in the near future, by coal- mining or coal-power plant employment loss, or employment loss in the supply-chain industries⁴ of either. Ongoing transitions in the United States energy sector generate outcomes that may impact, or have already impacted, different communities at different points in time.

Complete applications for a POWER FY20 grant must provide appropriate third-party economic and demographic statistics for the applicable community or region in order to document the extent to which contractions in the coal economy have negatively impacted the community or region. Applicants may use data that are available online at www.arc.gov/POWER and from other sources to demonstrate community and regional impacts of coal economy transitions.

In some instances, inclusion of a region in a particular dataset may be adequate documentation of coal impact. If a particular region is not included in these referenced datasets, the applicant will need to cite the data source used to demonstrate impact. Economic indicators, labor market analyses, official announcements made by local and regional industries and firms, demographic data, and industry data are strong sources of data to demonstrate these impacts. Applicants are encouraged to provide data (median income, coal mine closures, etc.) from other federal sources, which can be found at www.arc.gov/POWER.

2. Eligible Applicants

Eligible ARC applicants are:

- Local development districts
- Indian tribes or a consortium of Indian tribes

³ Expenses should include travel costs for at least one but no more than two project representatives, with preference for the project director's attendance. Applicants should estimate two full days of travel including one overnight hotel stay, airfare, ground transportation, and meals while traveling to and from the destination. For airfare (or driving), assume that the destination of the meeting will be several states away in Appalachia and that tickets will be medium- to high-priced.

⁴ Examples of supply chain industries include but are not necessarily limited to manufacturers of mining equipment and parts for coal-fired power plants and transportation companies that carry coal.

- States, counties, cities, or other political subdivision of a state, including a special purpose unit of a state or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions
- Institutions of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education
- Public or private non-profit organizations or associations

Please note that current POWER grantees are eligible to apply for POWER FY20 funds only if they are due to close out their POWER implementation projects within six months of the submission deadline (**April 24**). A section has been added to the application for current or previous POWER grantees to provide a thorough status update on their existing projects. Applications should include an expansion of geography, increased scope of work with an existing concept, or a proposal with a new concept. POWER FY20 funds will not be released until current POWER projects are successfully closed out.

Eligible applicants may partner with fiscal sponsors/agents to administer their grant award. Such applicants seeking to implement a POWER project may utilize a fiscal sponsor/agent to apply for an award on behalf of the implementing organization. By doing so, the sponsor/agent accepts all financial and legal liabilities for that organization at the time of award. Fiscal sponsors/agents must submit the application as the applicant organization. The authorized organizational representative responsible for approving all grant decisions should be listed as an employee of the fiscal sponsor/agent. Fiscal sponsors/agents are bound by the same requirements described in this RFP as all other applicant organizations. An applicant organization cannot accept an award and later transfer the award to a fiscal sponsor/agent. The intent of this provision is to diversify the pool of applicants accessing POWER funds, specifically supporting organizations that may lack the internal infrastructure necessary to manage large federal grant awards but have the knowledge, experience, and relationships necessary to effectively execute the desired scope of work.

AMENDMENT: Though fiscal sponsors/agents may be used to submit a POWER proposal, only local development districts (LDDs) are able to serve as the lead applicant on more than one POWER project at a time. Similarly, only LDDs can submit more than one POWER application in an application period. For all other entities, we will only consider the most recently received application that met the deadline. If the most recent application is disqualified for any reason, we will not replace it with an earlier application.

Previous ARC POWER technical assistance grant recipients that have developed an implementation project may apply for POWER FY20 implementation funding.

In addition, projects must serve and benefit a portion of the Appalachian region as defined by the ARDA of 1965, as amended. The Appalachian Region includes certain counties in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and all of West Virginia. If projects extend beyond the ARC region, only that portion that is within the Region is eligible for ARC funding. A map of the Appalachian Region is available online at www.arc.gov/POWER.

3. Cost Sharing or Matching

Under POWER FY20, applicants for an ARC grant must demonstrate a matching share from non-ARC sources that is identified and forthcoming to the project. Matching sources may be non-federal, other federal,⁵ or a combination of sources. The maximum share of ARC assistance is determined by the ARC classification of the county or counties served by the proposed activity. Applicants may request up to 80 percent of the total project cost when the county served by a project has been designated as economically “distressed” according to ARC’s FY20 classification. A table summarizing ARC’s economic designations and the maximum ARC share for each Appalachian county can be found online at www.arc.gov/POWER.

To determine the match rate for an ARC multi-county project, special matching rules apply:

1. If there is a distressed county in the project and:
 - a. At least half of the counties are distressed, the project may be funded at up to 80% of project costs;
 - b. At least half of the counties are some combination of distressed and at-risk, ARC assistance can be the higher of 70% of project costs or the average percentage applicable to the various counties in the project;
 - c. Fewer than half the counties are distressed, ARC assistance can be the higher of 50% of project costs or the average percentage applicable to the various counties in the project.
2. If there is no competitive county or attainment county in a project, and at least half the counties are at-risk, the project may be funded at up to 70% of project costs.
3. All other multi-county projects shall be funded at the average percentage applicable to the various counties in the project (i.e., 80%, 70%, 50%, 30%, or 0%); except that the portion of a project that is attributable to an attainment county in a project that does not include a distressed county shall be considered ineligible for ARC assistance and may not be considered for matching purposes.

4. Project Team Composition

Per the priorities and funding principles described previously, applicants are expected to assemble new or existing partnerships of community and economic development stakeholders to serve as members of a project team, which may include partners that are not eligible for ARC funding but are integral to a proposed project's success.

For purposes of application eligibility, it is not a requirement for each member of a project team to be located in a coal-impacted community; however, proposed projects must accrue benefits in coal-impacted communities. Any eligible member of a given project team may serve as the primary/lead applicant, and recipient, of ARC POWER grant awards.

⁵ In general, ARC is able to accept other federal dollars as a matching contribution. However, some federal sources and some specific projects may have limitations on the use of other and/or total federal funding. Prospective applicants are recommended to consult with ARC staff prior to submission if planning to use other federal funds as match.

Overall project team membership can comprise, but is not limited to, the following types of organizations:

- Economic development organizations
- Local governments
- Planning organizations and development districts
- Labor unions and labor-management apprenticeship programs
- State and local workforce agencies
- Institutions of higher education, including (but not limited to) community colleges and other job training and adult education providers
- Not-for-profit and community-based organizations including community action agencies that provide supportive services and human services providers
- Chambers of commerce, industry and trade associations, local and regional business owners, and other representatives from the private sector

F. POWER FY20 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Request a POWER FY20 Application

The electronic POWER FY20 application will be available on **January 13, 2020**. Applicants may access the application electronically online at www.power.arc.gov.

A letter of intent (LOI) to apply for POWER FY20 funding is required before an implementation or technical assistance application can be officially submitted. It is due to power@arc.gov by **February 28, 2020**. The LOI will then be forwarded to the states impacted by the proposal. Confirmation of receipt will include a passcode that will allow applicant to formally submit their application at power.arc.gov.

NOTE: Applications will not be considered officially submitted without the input of the required passcode. Submitted applications for POWER FY20 funding that substantially differ from the information included on the received LOI will be disqualified during the review process.

Additionally, previously submitted POWER applications that were not selected for funding must be resubmitted to receive consideration for POWER FY20 funds.

2. Content and Form of POWER FY20 Application

POWER FY20 grant applications follow ARC's standard application policies and procedures.

Application narratives are limited to 15 pages, single-spaced in length. The types of information requested by ARC include strategic rationale of the project, demonstration of collaborative partnerships, project sustainability, applicant capacity, and measurable impact. In addition, a detailed project budget is required.

Applicants are to minimize the number and size of attachments and appendices submitted with their proposal. There will be size limits on the POWER Initiative portal where applications are submitted, with a final application totaling no more than 125 pages. This total includes both the narrative and the uploaded attachments.

Applications from organizations that received a previous POWER implementation award must also include documentation of the impact of the original POWER funds.

Supportive documents and completion of federal forms will be required after the application has been preliminarily selected for funding.

Additional ARC project application requirements and guidance are described in detail at the ARC POWER home page (www.arc.gov/POWER).

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

As required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, applicants are required to:

- Be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting their application (SAM now encompasses the Central Contractor Registration (CCR));
- Provide a valid Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, a unique entity identifier, in their application; and
- Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which they have an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Letters of intent are due by **February 28, 2020 at 5:00 PM (ET)** in order to officially submit your application.

All POWER FY20 applications are due **April 24, 2020 at 5:00PM (ET)**.

LOIs and applications must be completed and submitted by the above deadlines to be considered for funding.

5. Application Submission Instructions

After January 13, 2020, POWER FY20 project applications (and related attachments) can be submitted electronically, following the submission of the LOI, via the POWER Initiative portal available at www.power.arc.gov.

NOTE: This online application portal has been established for POWER FY20 project **applications** only.

Prior to submission of the application, every applicant is required to contact the state program managers of the states impacted by the project proposal. The state officials will ensure that the proposals are in alignment with their state Appalachian economic development priorities.

Neither facsimile nor email transmissions of applications will be accepted.

After an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process during which the application may be accepted or rejected due to errors, incomplete information, or ineligible applicant and/or service area. Be advised that it may take several days for the validation process to be completed and that the process may not begin until after the

application deadline. Applications found to be missing required information or to contain critical errors will not be reviewed or evaluated.

6. Funding Restrictions

POWER FY20 grant awards funded in part or in whole with ARC program funds are subject to the same program funding restrictions of other ARC grants. Additional program information is available at www.arc.gov/POWER.

G. POWER FY20 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

POWER applications will first be reviewed by the ARC Alternates of the states in which the project's activities and impacts are located. This initial review will ensure that the project's scope of work is strategic and compatible with the state's existing economic development priorities.

ARC program staff, state ARC officials, and outside subject matter experts will jointly review and score applications based on the criteria set out in this document. Reviewers will consider the extent to which the application addresses ARC's strategic investment goals, investment priorities, objectives, and funding principles, and the degree of documented recent coal impact on the economy of the region to be served.

ARC reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with applicants that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove or adjust certain proposed costs.

Additionally, ARC may request that the applicant modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information pertaining to any aspect of the application. ARC also reserves the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the applicant's ability to successfully fulfill the objectives and requirements of the grant award.

ARC, in its complete and sole discretion, may select for award some, all, or none of the applications received under this competitive solicitation. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the ARC federal co-chair and the respective state ARC official(s). The award decision of the ARC federal co-chair and the respective state ARC official(s) is final.

H. POWER FY20 AWARD ADMINISTRATION

General management and administration requirements for non-construction projects are contained in the [ARC Grant Administration Manual for Non-Construction Grant Agreements](#). Administration of ARC awards is also subject to the same regulations, restrictions, and requirements as other federal awards. These include but are not limited to administrative requirements and cost principles; Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); past performance and non-compliance; restrictions on making awards to corporations convicted of felony criminal violations and unpaid federal tax liabilities; environmental and historic preservation; and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Recipients of non-construction grants must adhere to ARC reporting requirements as identified in the [ARC Grant Administration Manual for Non-Construction Grant](#)

[Agreements](#). However, ARC reserves the right to change the reporting time periods and, depending on the nature of the project, may request additional relevant data.

Grants involving construction will require the use of a basic agency to administer the funds, and grantees will be subject to the reporting requirements of that agency. For more information on basic agencies, please follow the link here:

www.arc.gov/funding/BasicAgencies.asp.

Partnerships submitting applications involving construction, renovations, restoration, and other similar activities are strongly encouraged to contact their ARC state program managers (see www.arc.gov/about/StateProgramManagers.asp) and ARC program specialists for guidance on securing a basic agency.

I. ARC AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Prior to submission of the application, every applicant is required to contact the state program managers of the states impacted by the project proposal. The state officials will ensure that the proposals are in alignment with their state Appalachian economic development priorities. State program managers also serve as a resource regarding any questions applicants have about the POWER Initiative in general, as well as with any specific questions they have about the use of agency funds to support projects in their communities and regions. Applicants with additional questions may submit them to POWER@arc.gov.

J. GENERAL DISCLOSURES

POWER FY20 Initiative awards will be made only to the extent that funds are available. Publication of this RFP does not obligate ARC to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds. Applicants intending to contract with a specific individual, consulting group, or organization with ARC funding must have a competitive procurement policy in place.

This RFP does not commit ARC to make any specific award. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the RFP, ARC reserves the right to award grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts to communities or regions that best meet the requirements of the RFP. ARC solely reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of this request; to negotiate with all qualified sources; or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP if it is in the interests of ARC to do so.

Please note that ARC will not reimburse any other costs associated with the preparation of a response to this RFP. Consultants and consultant teams that are legally barred from receiving federal contracts or contract payments will not be considered for work with communities or regions under this RFP.