pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Appalachian Regional Commission

Program Guidelines | June 2012

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Table of Contents

Section I – Introduction

A. General

These guidelines provide guidance to Local Development Districts (LDDs) and to potential sponsors of projects for funding requested from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) (Refer to Exhibit I) and assist in preparing applications for funding. In addition to general information on technical assistance contacts, this document provides a detailed statement of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's policies for ARC projects (including categories of eligible projects), and instructions for completing the application.

The seven Local Developments Districts (Refer to Exhibit II) are key agencies in the project development and review process in Pennsylvania. They provide technical assistance to local project sponsors and prepare priority lists of recommended projects for consideration by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) in its preparation of the annual ARC State Strategy. All potential projects sponsors should contact the appropriate LDD identified on page 7 prior to preparing the project summary or application. The project proposal package should be completed in close consultation with the LDD.

The LDD will identify a basic federal or state-administering agency for the proposed project, if applicable. Potential project sponsors should be aware that all projects must:

- Implement a specific strategy for addressing one of the four goals in ARC's Strategic Plan.

- Demonstrate consistency with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Appalachian Regional Commission's State Strategy and any appropriate LDD or regional planning documents. The LDD or Appalachian Development Center (ADC) can provide further information concerning these strategies and plans and their relationship to specific project proposals.

B. Eligibility

Following are examples of eligible projects that may be considered for funding if the activity is listed as a priority in the Pennsylvania Annual Strategy Statement. Eligible projects include but are not limited to:

1. Technical assistance projects that:

   a. Provide services to a community to enhance business development.

   b. Meet the criteria for immediate, permanent job creation/retention or strategic plan implementation.

2. Industrial site development including site preparation, water, sewer or other needed improvements.

3. Local Access Roads.

4. Local government assistance demonstration projects providing for service consolidation, management assistance or any other arrangements directed to more effective delivery of programs and services.

5. Acquisition and development of business incubator or multi-tenant facilities.

6. Destination or asset-based tourism.

7. All applicants must be not-for-profit entities and must work with one of the LDDs and/or ADC in the region. No ARC grants will be awarded to a for-profit entity.

C. General Program Requirements

All ARC assisted projects must:

1. Relate to one or more goals and objectives set forth in the approved State Appalachian Development Plan.

2. Be included in the state's approved Strategy Statement.

3. Provide reasonable assurance that the project maximizes all available federal and non-federal funds prior to seeking ARC resources.

4. Provide reasonable assurances that the project is consistent with applicable state and/or federal plans, policies, and regulations.

5. Be signed by the Governor or his designee.

6. Provide reasonable assurance of the availability of non-federal shares of projects costs where matching funds are required.

7. Provide reasonable assurance of management capacity to effectively carry out the project or program.

8. Contain detailed output and outcome measures by which project performance may be evaluated.

Section II – The Application Process

A. General

The application process begins with submission of a Project Summary to the appropriate Local Development District or directly to the ADC. Following a review of the Project Summary, a request for a complete application may be issued.

To assist the Commission with the project evaluations required by the Appalachian Regional Development Act and the Code, all applications for ARC assistance must provide the following information and explanations:

1. **Goals and Objectives** – Relate the project to one or more of the ARC Strategic Plan goals and to one or more of the strategies in the State's Annual Strategy Statement.

2. **Purpose and Rationale for the Project** – Describe the principle purpose and rationale (need) for the project and the problems or issues the project addresses.

3. **Project Description** – Provide a detailed description of major project activities, including:

   a. **For a non-construction project** – Identify parties who will complete each activity, and provide a projected timeline for completion.

   b. **For a construction project** – Describe the scope of work and provide an estimated completion date along with identification of a Basic Federal Agency.

4. **Relation to Other Local/Regional Activities** – Describe how the project meets the priorities of local and regional community or economic development plans. Describe efforts to coordinate the project with other area economic development activities.

5. **Geographic Area** – Identify and describe the geographic area to be served.

6. **Current and Future Economic Value** – Identify the number of employers or households to be served, the number of existing employees, projected number of jobs to be created, and the amount of funds committed by the private sector (if applicable). If possible, describe how the project will assist future economic development in the area.

7. **Benefits and Performance Measures** – Describe the expected benefits to be derived from the project in quantitative and qualitative terms. Include the outputs and outcomes in accordance with ARC Performance Measurement Guidelines. Benchmarks and performance measures are identified for each ARC-assisted project by using the following definitions:

   a. Output measures are indicators that count the goods and services produced by an individual or agency.

   b. Efficiency measures are indicators that measure the unit cost associated with a given output; and

   c. Outcome measures are indicators that measure the actual impact of public benefit of the actions of an individual or agency.

8. **Funding Need** – Detail the need for ARC funding and identify each funding source for the project.

B. Application Submission and Approval Procedures

1. ARC projects shall be generated from one of the seven LDDs or the ADC in partnership with other entities.

2. All applications are initially screened to determine funding eligibility. The screening process assesses consistency with the Commission's four goals and strategies. This screening begins with submission and review of a Project Summary.

3. Completeness, readiness, need, prioritization and feasibility of the project are the determining factors in assessing proposals.

4. When recommending a particular project, the state also considers whether the project improves on a continuing basis the opportunities for employment, the average income or economic and social development of the area served.

5. Subsequent project status reports are submitted in accordance with ARC grant policies.

C. Application Evaluation Criteria

1. When evaluating and selecting projects for ARC assistance, Pennsylvania:

    a. Looks favorably at projects generating business formation and job creation;

    b. Supports projects that enhance the entrepreneurial vitality of the state.

    c. Seeks efforts that exhibit a high level of local and regional support.

D. Procedures

Contact the Local Development District in your area to receive:

1. A copy of the PA ARC State Strategy,

2. Assistance developing the project summary and subsequent proposal, and

3. Technical assistance in completing necessary federal forms.

E. Limitations and Penalties

1. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania expects an ARC grant recipient to contribute its own resources to a project to the extent it is able to do so and aggressively seek additional non-ARC funding assistance.

2. Matching funds must be identified by amount and source with assurances that such funds are available.

3. Pennsylvania's ARC participation costs will generally be limited to 50 percent of project costs, with some exceptions as detailed in the PA ARC State Strategy.

F. Contact Information

Program inquiries should be directed to:

PA Department of Community & Economic Development
Appalachian Development Center
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 4th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225

Telephone: (717) 214-5395
Fax: (717) 783-4663

Exhibit I

Appalachian Regional Commission Program

The Appalachian Regional Commission is thirteen state regional economic development agencies representing a unique partnership of federal, state, and local government. Grassroots participation is provided through consultation with multi-county planning and development organizations and Local Development Districts (LDDs) to support development of Appalachia's human and community infrastructure. The Appalachian region within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania consists of fifty-two counties served by the seven LDDs.

ARC funds are leveraged with other federal, state and local money to provide a broad array of small business assistance to the Appalachian region. The priorities for investment of ARC resources are determined essentially to accomplish four long-term strategic goals for Pennsylvania's economy.

ARC Goals

Goal 1 –   Increase Job Opportunities and Per Capita Income in Appalachia to Reach Parity with the Nation

Goal 2 –   Strengthen the Capacity of the People of Appalachia to Compete in the Global Economy

Goal 3 –   Develop and Improve Appalachia's Infrastructure to Make the Region Economically Competitive

Goal 4 –   Build the Appalachian Development Highway System to Reduce Appalachia's Isolation

Exhibit II

Local Development Districts and the counties each serves:

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance
1151 Oak Street
Pittston, PA 18640
570-655-5581; Fax 570-654-5137
(Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill, Wayne)

North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission
651 Montmorenci Avenue
Ridgway, PA 15853
814-773-3162; Fax 814-772-7045
(Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, Potter)

Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission
312 Main Street
Towanda, PA 18848
570-265-9103; Fax 570-265-7585
(Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wyoming)

Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission
395 Seneca Street
Oil City, PA 16301
814-677-4800; Fax 814-677-7663
(Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Warren)

SEDA-COG
201 Furnace Road
Lewisburg, PA 17837
570-524-4491; Fax 570-524-9190
(Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, Union)

Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission
3 Sheraton Drive
Altoona, PA 16601
814-949-6500; Fax 814-949-6505
(Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, Somerset)

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
425 6th Avenue
25th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-391-5590; Fax 412-391-9160
(Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, Westmoreland)