

West Virginia Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Area Development Program

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

FY2026

**Application Period Opens: January 1, 2026
Application Period Ends (application deadline): March 31, 2026**

West Virginia ARC Area Development NOFA for FY 2026

The West Virginia Division of Economic Development (WVDED) will begin accepting applications for the FY 2026 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) area development program under the following schedule:

Application Period Opens: January 1, 2026

Application Period Ends (application deadline): March 31, 2026

This Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) provides an overview of the West Virginia ARC area development program, including funding priorities, general guidelines, and requirements needed to complete and submit an application.

Questions about the West Virginia ARC program can be directed to:

James Bush

West Virginia ARC State Program Manager

West Virginia Division of Economic Development

304-558-2234

James.E.Bush@wv.gov

Or

Krista Cox

West Virginia ARC Program Specialist

West Virginia Division of Economic Development

304-558-2234

Krista.K.Cox@wv.gov

Interested applicants can contact the individuals identified above at any time during the application period for no-cost technical assistance.

WVDED manages the ARC program in West Virginia, including ARC area development funds. Eligible applicants apply to the WVDED for ARC area development funding.

Information on the ARC can be found at www.arc.gov. Applicants should also consult the Applicant Resources section of the ARC website, found at www.arc.gov/applicant-resources.

Overview

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a regional economic development program that represents a partnership of federal, state, and local government. Established by an act of Congress in 1965 through the Appalachian Regional Development Act (ARDA) 40 U.S. Code § 14101–14704, 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 (LDDs). 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.

ARC provides grants to eligible applicants for community and economic development projects. It has several different funding programs, including POWER, INSPIRE, ARISE, and area development funding. This NOFA is specifically for ARC area development funding in West Virginia only. For information on the other funding programs, please visit www.arc.gov.

Funding Priorities

The highest priorities for the West Virginia ARC area development program are the following:

- basic infrastructure such as water, wastewater, and stormwater, particularly projects in ARC-designated distressed counties (high priority)
- industrial and commercial site development (high priority)
- workforce development
- tourism and outdoor recreation

Interested applicants should note the following guidelines regarding ARC funds:

- ARC funds must be for public benefit: water and wastewater systems must be owned by a public entity or public service district, and the system owner must be the applicant. ARC cannot participate in a project in which the owner of the system is a private, for-profit entity.
- All water and wastewater applications must first be reviewed and approved by the WV Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council (IJDC). The IJDC review comments and funding recommendation letter must be included with the pre-application submitted to our office.
- ARC funds cannot be used to improve private property.

ARC funds are limited, and our office normally receives far more requests for funding than we have funds available. Interested applicants should keep the priorities noted above in mind as they decide to apply to the program. Applicants must also be aware of the matching requirements for all ARC funding (see matching section below).

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for ARC funding are the following:

- 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 nonprofit organizations or associations
- Local development districts (LDDs)

Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible funding requests must meet the following criteria:

- Project relates to one or more of the ARC/State of West Virginia development strategies (eligible strategies are listed at the end of this NOFA).
- Projects are clearly described, including documented need, activities, and achievable outcomes.
- Applicant has the experience and capacity to manage the project. Nonprofit organizations must demonstrate adequate capacity, including full-time staff, current 501(c)3 status, and a demonstrated track record of managing comparable projects.

Eligible Activities and Costs

ARC funds cannot be used for research, improvements to state or local government buildings, or for the general conduct of state or local government business. In addition, ARC does not fund public safety (police cars or fire trucks), social services, athletic stadiums or fields, or skate parks. ARC projects must have a primary focus on economic development outcomes and benefits.

Administrative costs such as staff and personnel that are directly tied to project implementation are eligible costs. Both implementation and planning projects are eligible for funding; however, priority is placed on implementation grants.

Grant Amount Thresholds

There are no maximums or minimums in how much applicants can request in ARC funds. However, funds are limited and very competitive. As a guide, applicants can use the following ranges for their project in deciding how much to request in ARC funding:

Project Type:	ARC Amount:
Water/wastewater projects in ARC-designated distressed counties:	Up to \$4 million
Water/wastewater projects in non-distressed counties:	Up to \$1 million
Site development projects:	Up to \$2 million
Non-construction projects:	Up to \$500,000

Please note that the ranges indicated above are based on past trends and are noted here as guides for applicants in developing projects. WVDED reserves the right to fund projects outside the ranges noted above. Applicants must follow ARC matching requirements (see matching section below).

Construction Projects

All construction projects must have a basic agency identified to administer the project. More information on ARC basic agency requirements, including a list of basic agencies, can be found at www.arc.gov/basic-agency-partners.

Construction project applications should include a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) that contains a description of the need for the project, a detailed scope of work, project budgets with firm cost estimates, permit requirements, status of lands and rights-of way, and a project schedule.

Infrastructure projects (water and wastewater) must include a copy of the Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council (IJDC) review letter and all technical review committee comments. An application for an ARC-assisted construction project should include a discussion of any efforts that may have been made to improve the energy efficiency of the project.

All applicants interested in applying for a construction project are strongly encouraged to work with their appropriate West Virginia regional planning and development council, including identifying a basic agency for the project. Information on the regional councils can be found at www.wvregionalcouncils.org.

Residential Service Policy (Infrastructure Projects Only)

ARC will provide grants for basic residential infrastructure projects only for communities in ARC-designated distressed counties, except that such assistance may be provided in an at-risk or transitional county upon a special showing of compelling need such as the location of the project in a distressed area of the county, or as disaster relief, or to address a mandate of the Federal EPA or a state health or environmental agency. Self-help projects for basic residential infrastructure may also be funded in transitional counties.

Matching Requirements

Applicants for an ARC grant must demonstrate a matching share from non-ARC sources that is identified and committed to the project. Matching sources may be non-federal, other federal, or a combination of sources, including in-kind sources.

Commitment letters for all matching funds should be included in the application. Letters should be signed and on the letterhead of the source agency or organization and include the exact amount of funds that are being committed to the project.

In-kind match must be realistic and documented in the application, including a detailed breakdown of exactly how the value of the in-kind match was derived.

The maximum share of ARC assistance is determined by the ARC classification of the county or counties served by the proposed activity. County classifications in West Virginia for FY2026 and the matching share required are detailed below:

Distressed Counties—ARC participation costs are limited to 80% of the total project cost:
Braxton, Calhoun, Clay, Lincoln, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, Roane, Webster, Wirt, and Wyoming.

At-Risk Counties—ARC participation costs are limited to 70% of the total project cost:
Barbour, Boone, Fayette, Gilmer, Greenbrier, Hardy, Jackson, Lewis, Mason, Mercer, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Randolph, Ritchie, Summers, Tyler, Upshur, Wayne, and Wetzel.

Transitional Counties—ARC participation costs are limited to 50% of the total project cost:
Berkeley, Brooke, Cabell, Doddridge, Grant, Hampshire, Hancock, Harrison, Kanawha, Marion, Marshall, Mineral, Monongalia, Monroe, Morgan, Ohio, Pendleton, Pleasants, Preston, Putnam, Taylor, Tucker, and Wood.

Competitive Counties—ARC participation costs are limited to 30% of the total project cost:
Jefferson.

The level of ARC participation may vary in projects that include activities and/or services involving at least one or more distressed and at least one or more non-distressed county. Please check with our office as you plan multi-county projects to determine the exact match requirement.

More information on ARC match requirements can be found at www.arc.gov/match-requirements-for-arc-grants.

SAM Requirements

As required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 and 2 CFR §200, Appendix I, applicants are required to meet the following criteria:

- Be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting their application (www.sam.gov)
- Provide a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) in their application
- Always maintain an active SAM registration with current information whenever they have an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency.

Performance Measures

Applicants must follow the Guide to ARC Project Performance Measures. The guide can be found online at www.arc.gov/resource/guide-to-arc-project-performance-measures.

For water, wastewater, and stormwater projects, the project outcomes are the number of customers being served by the project. The total number should be broken down by residential, commercial, and other customers (other being nonprofit, community institutions, public buildings or facilities).

Application Process

Steps to Apply:

- **Review this NOFA entirely before completing the application.** Make sure you are aware of the program priorities and guidelines contained in the NOFA. Contact WVDED if you have any questions (program contacts are listed on page 1).
- Applicants must submit a pre-application to WVDED. The pre-application consists of the WV ARC Project Executive Summary and all necessary attachments listed on the executive summary. A copy of the WV ARC Project Executive Summary can be obtained by emailing the program contacts listed on page 1 of this NOFA or online at www.wvcad.org/resources, under the Appalachian Regional Commission.
- The pre-application must be submitted to WVDED before the deadline noted on page 1 of this NOFA. The pre-application and all attachments should be submitted by email to Krista Cox at Krista.K.Cox@wv.gov. In the subject line, applicants need to state: FY2026 ARC Application Submission.
- If necessary, applicants can submit a hard copy of the pre-application, including all attachments, to the following address:

JAMES BUSH
 WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
 1900 KANAWHA BOULEVARD EAST
 BUILDING 3, SUITE 700
 CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305

- Email applications must be received by 5:00 on the day of the application deadline. Mailed applications must be postmarked on or before the day of the application deadline.

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Review and Approval Process

WVDED will review all pre-applications received and will contact applicants for additional information or clarification as necessary. WVDED will then make recommendations to the Governor on which applications should receive ARC funding. The recommended projects are submitted to ARC headquarters staff for review and final approval.

General Disclosure

WVDED reserves the right to modify the scope of work, activities, and expected outcomes for any application for ARC assistance, and to increase or decrease the amount of funds being requested. Any such modifications will be negotiated with the applicant. Publication of this NOFA does not obligate WVDED to make any specific recommendation of funding to ARC or to obligate any or all of the ARC funds available to the State of West Virginia.

Award Administration

ARC non-construction projects are administered by ARC, not by WVDED. ARC construction projects are administered by the basic agency approved for the project.

Administration of ARC awards is subject to the same regulations, restrictions, and requirements as other federal awards. These include but are not limited to “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards” at 2 CFR §200, as currently updated; 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 national policy requirements, including but not limited to those protecting free speech, religious liberty, public welfare, the environment, and prohibiting discrimination, e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

ARC area development funds are subject to the domestic content procurement (Buy America) preference requirements set forth in the Build America, Buy America Act. This Buy America preference will apply to the infrastructure portion of all grants involving infrastructure regardless of whether the primary purpose of the award is an infrastructure project. Details about this domestic content procurement preference are available at <http://www.arc.gov/BuyAmericaGuidelines>. Additionally, ARC-funded construction projects are subject to the Davis-Bacon Act.

ARC reserves the right to change the reporting time periods and, depending on the nature of the project, may request additional relevant data. In addition, ARC requires grantees to cooperate with post-award evaluations, which require maintaining records for at least three years after project closeout. All ARC awards are subject to audit. If your organization has been subject to a federal audit within the past five years, please note within your application the recommendations made and your subsequent responses to those recommendations.

Non-Construction Projects

General management and administration requirements for ARC non-construction projects are contained in the Grant Administration Manual for Non-Construction Grants. The manual can be found online at www.arc.gov/grantee-resources.

Development of the Travel and Tourism Industry

ARC recognizes the development of the travel and tourism industry as an important component of the Commission's strategy to improve the economic health of the Appalachian Region.

ARC will support activities as they relate to the travel and tourism industry in the context of an overall development strategy such as:

- Planning and research
- Training and technical assistance
- Education and capacity building
- Marketing and promotional efforts

Infrastructure projects related to the travel and tourism industry will be reviewed using the same criteria as that used for all other economic development projects. Proposals to use ARC funds for capital investments in this sector, including construction and acquisition, are not prohibited but will be reviewed stringently. In particular, such projects must be an integral part of a strategic plan for the community and/or region and must meet the highest standards of a cost-benefit analysis as to economic outcomes.

FY2025 Area Development Recommendations

A list of the FY 2025 West Virginia ARC area development recommendations can be found at the end of this NOFA. The list provides a good example of what the West Virginia ARC program prioritizes for funding.

West Virginia ARC FY 2026 State Strategies

West Virginia's ARC state strategies are listed below. Each strategy is aligned with the goals and objectives of the ARC Startegic Plan, Appalachia Envisioned: A New Era of Opportunity 2022-2026. All projects requesting assistance from the West Virginia ARC program must match one of the state strategies listed below to receive consideration for funding.

ARC Goal 1: Business Development. Strengthen Appalachia's economy through investments in entrepreneurship and business development.

ARC Objective 1.1: Provide financing, technical assistance, and other support for entrepreneurship and small business development in Appalachia.

State Strategy 1.1.1: Support initiatives that provide training, assistance, and other services to entrepreneurs for the creation and expansion of businesses.

State Strategy 1.1.2: Increase access to capital for entrepreneurs and businesses.

State Strategy 1.1.3: Promote downtown redevelopment through support of programs such as Main Street and local business retention and expansion efforts.

State Strategy 1.1.4: Support export strategies to connect start-up and established businesses with external and global markets.

ARC Objective 1.2: Pursue economic and enterprise development strategies that grow existing industries and advance economic prosperity at the regional level.

State Strategy 1.2.1: Support planning and implementation activities that identify and capitalize upon emerging economic opportunities and sectors in the state.

ARC Goal 2: Workforce Development. Expand and strengthen systems that help Appalachians obtain a job, stay on the job, and advance along a financially sustaining career pathway.

ARC Objective 2.1: Develop and support educational institutions and employer-driven programs that provide the building blocks for skills development and long-term employment success.

State Strategy 2.1.1: Support local and regional initiatives to better prepare students, out-of-school youths, and adults for post-secondary-level training.

State Strategy 2.1.2: Support literacy, lifelong learning, and dropout prevention initiatives.

State Strategy 2.1.3: Provide funding for educational and workforce development strategies that increase science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills in students.

ARC Objective 2.2: Invest in workforce development programs and strategies informed by industry talent needs and designed to allow workers to simultaneously earn, learn, and advance along a career pathway.

State Strategy 2.2.1: Support planning and implementation activities that improve workforce readiness for current and future employment needs.

State Strategy 2.2.2: Assist efforts to increase business competitiveness and retention in the state through workforce training and certification programs.

State Strategy 2.2.3: Encourage youth and student opportunities for work and community service experiences, including internships, mentorships, leadership development, and job shadowing.

ARC Objective 2.3: Develop a network of employment supports to help Appalachians, including those in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD), enter and remain in the workforce.

State Strategy 2.3.1: Develop and support training and job-placement programs for individuals recovering from substance use disorders.

State Strategy 2.3.2: Promote efforts that increase access to quality childcare to support workforce recruitment and retention.

State Strategy 2.3.3: Invest in innovative housing initiatives that support economic development or improve local community livability and quality of life.

ARC Objective 2.4: Expand access to high quality healthcare as well as programs and services that support overall health for workers and their families.

State Strategy 2.4.1: Enhance community-based healthy living initiatives that address diabetes, obesity, substance use disorders and other conditions that constitute barriers to workforce participation and community quality of life.

State Strategy 2.4.2: Improve medical facilities and infrastructure to increase access to high-quality health care in underserved areas and improve public health.

ARC Goal 3: Infrastructure. Ensure access to reliable, affordable, and resilient infrastructure and utilities to improve residents' quality of life, grow existing businesses and attract new industries to the Region.

ARC Objective 3.1: Ensure the availability of quality, affordable basic infrastructure to meet the needs of the residents and businesses of Appalachia.

State Strategy 3.1.1: Provide support for the improvement or expansion of basic infrastructure such as water, wastewater, and storm water systems to increase community quality of life and facilitate economic development.

State Strategy 3.1.2: Work with localities and regional organizations to support the planning, assessment, and prioritization of basic infrastructure needs to ensure greater efficiency and coordination of infrastructure investments.

State Strategy 3.1.3: Support technical assistance services and programs that improve the efficiency and long-term operations of local water and wastewater systems.

ARC Objective 3.2: Ensure that all Appalachians have access to robust, reliable and affordable telecommunications and broadband services.

State Strategy 3.2.1: Make strategic investments in high-speed telecommunications infrastructure to increase local and regional connectivity and access.

State Strategy 3.2.2: Encourage and support the innovative use of telecommunications in education, health care, business, government, and infrastructure initiatives.

State Strategy 3.2.3: Assist planning, analysis, and training activities that increase broadband access, adoption, and deployment in the state.

ARC Objective 3.3: Support activities that enable America's energy dominance through strategies that emphasize affordable, reliable, and domestic energy solutions.

State Strategy 3.3.1: Support planning, development, and implementation efforts that capitalize the state's energy resources and assets for economic growth.

ARC Objective 3.4: Complete the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) and invest in innovative intermodal transportation systems to connect businesses and residents within the Region with global opportunities

State Strategy 3.4.1: Assist federal and state efforts in solving design problems and moving ADHS sections to the construction phase.

State Strategy 3.4.2: Support local access road projects that result in economic development, provision of essential services, or community revitalization.

State Strategy 3.4.3: Invest in improvements to transportation facilities such as rail, inland ports, and airports that increase economic development and access to markets.

State Strategy 3.4.4: Support the development of transportation corridors (highway, rail, and waterway) that increase access to markets outside the Appalachian region.

State Strategy 3.4.5: Support the planning and development of intermodal transportation facilities.

ARC Objective 3.5: Support construction and renovation of business development sites and public facilities and the adaptive reuse of obsolete and/or unsafe properties to stimulate economic and community development.

State Strategy 3.5.1: Invest in the development and improvement of industrial sites, commercial and industrial parks, and shell buildings that will spur economic development.

State Strategy 3.5.2: Support planning, assessment, and redevelopment efforts that target vacant and dilapidated buildings.

State Strategy 3.5.3: Assist with the reclamation and redevelopment of brownfields and mine impacted sites to convert them to productive economic and community uses.

ARC Goal 4: Tourism and Outdoor Recreation. Strengthen Appalachia's economic development potential by investing in revenue-generating tourism assets and outdoor recreation industry growth.

ARC Objective 4.1: Invest in the development of vibrant downtowns to drive revenue for businesses and create job opportunities.

State Strategy 4.1.1: Leverage support for downtown redevelopment efforts that will enhance local and regional tourism and outdoor recreation initiatives.

ARC Objective 4.2: Invest in economic development initiatives that leverage Appalachian communities' unique arts and cultural heritage traditions to bolster regional tourism.

State Strategy 4.2.1: Support efforts to identify, assess, and mobilize regional assets, including natural, cultural, and structural assets and resources that can be utilized for economic growth and diversification.

ARC Objective 4.3: Develop, manage, and expand outdoor recreation assets for visitors and residents to generate revenue and produce employment opportunities.

State Strategy 4.3.1: Promote the development of outdoor recreation trails and facilities that enhance economic development opportunities.

State Strategy 4.3.2: Support planning, assessment, and implementation activities that improve and expand upon the state's natural, historical, and cultural assets for economic development and growth.

ARC Goal 5: Community Resources and Skill-building. Invest in economic development skill-building, training, technical assistance and resources that help Appalachian leaders, organizations, and communities strengthen the regional economy—now and into the future.

ARC Objective 5.1: Invest in economic development skill-building and resources to help local leaders and organizations identify and champion collaborative strategies to address Appalachia's most pressing economic needs.

State Strategy 5.1.1: Encourage and support the training and development of local and regional community leadership.

ARC Objective 5.2: Invest in training and resources that support communities, local governments, and municipalities with strategic planning, preparedness, action planning and implementation for long-term economic vitality.

State Strategy 5.2.1: Support planning, analysis, and technical assistance activities for local and regional organizations and units of government to capitalize on economic development opportunities and assets, address critical needs, or improve community quality of life.

ARC Objective 5.3: Invest in resources and skill-building to help local development districts (LDDs) and state partners implement operational efficiencies and strategic partnerships that advance the regional economy.

State Strategy 5.3.1: Provide support to regional planning and development councils in the state that will improve their ability to plan, implement, and complete projects.

FY2025 WV ARC Recommended Projects

Sponsor/Project Name	County(s)/Multi-County	ARC Funds	Total Project Cost	Basic Agency	Project Description
West Virginia Division of Economic Development-Consolidated Technical Assistance Grant	Statewide	\$220,000	\$440,000	ARC	The West Virginia Development Office, with ARC funding assistance, will continue the Consolidated Technical Assistance program. The grant allows the West Virginia Development Office to employ staff for the purpose of providing technical assistance to ARC applicants and grantees, monitoring and administering ongoing projects, updating the West Virginia Development Plan, and maintaining a project information system
West Virginia Division of Economic Development-Competitive Improvement Program	Statewide	\$250,000	\$750,000	ARC	The project will provide training and consultation services to West Virginia's small to medium sized manufacturing and technology firms that are facing competitiveness issues, strengthening their ability to compete and increasing job opportunities for West Virginians
Morgan County Commission -Cacapon Ridge Recreation Trail Plan	Morgan	\$82,368	\$164,736	ARC	The project will provide funds for a feasibility study and preliminary design for a non-motorized connector trail between Cacapon State Park and the Town of Bath in Morgan County. Creation of the recreation trail will expand biking and hiking facilities in the area, attract visitors, and increase outdoor recreation tourism in the region.
Region 7 Planning and Development Council-Central West Virginia Infrastructure Assessment	Multi-County	\$210,000	\$300,000	ARC	The project will assess a seven-county region to identify communities and areas that lack access to public water and wastewater service. Based on this data, the assessment will then determine the most cost-efficient means of expanding service to those locations. The project will serve Barbour, Braxton, Gilmer, Lewis, Randolph, Tucker, and Upshur Counties.
McDowell County PSD-Jolo Water Extension Phase 5	McDowell	\$3,499,000	\$7,752,000	WVDED	The project will extend public water service to the Jolo area of McDowell County. Customers in the project area currently rely upon individual wells that provide an unreliable quantity or quality of water or haul water from nearby sources. The project will benefit 119 new customers.
Mingo County PSD-Gilbert Hanover Water Extension	Multi-County	\$3,000,000	\$8,435,833	WVDED	The project will improve and extend water service to customers in the Justice area of Mingo County and the Hanover area of Wyoming County. Currently the customers in the project areas rely upon individual wells and small treatment plants that are unreliable or provide a poor quality of water. The project will benefit 451 total customers, including 215 new household and non-residential customers and 236 existing household and non-residential customers.
Ravenciff McGraws Saulsville PSD-Glen Rogers Sewer System Improvements	Wyoming	\$2,700,000	\$5,725,000	WVDED	The project will replace and upgrade the Glen Rogers wastewater treatment plant in Wyoming County. The current treatment plant was constructed in 1972 and is in need of significant upgrades. This project is the first phase of a multi-phase project to upgrade the entire Glen Rogers collection system. This phase will benefit 88 existing customers.
Birch River PSD-Keener Ridge Water Extension	Mutli-County	\$1,306,920	\$2,625,000	WVDED	The project will extend public water service to customers along Keener Ridge Road in Nicholas and Braxton Counties. Currently customers in the project area rely upon unreliable private wells or must haul water from another location. The project will benefit 29 new customers with new water service and include the installation of fire hydrants for fire protection.
Totals:		\$11,268,288	\$26,192,569		