



**The North Carolina Appalachian Regional Commission Program
North Carolina Department of Commerce**

**FY 2019 Area Development and Access Road
Pre-Application Guidelines**

ARC Background

Appalachia, as defined by Congress, is a 200,000-square-mile region with about 23 million people. Following the spine of the Appalachian Mountains, it 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](#) is a regional economic development agency representing a unique partnership of federal, state and local government. The Commission is composed of the governors of 13 Appalachian states and a federal co-chair, who is appointed by the president. Grassroots participation is provided through multi-county local development districts with boards made up of elected officials, businesspeople, and other local leaders. Each year, Congress appropriates funds that ARC allocates among the Appalachian states. The governors consulting with local development districts (LDD) draw up state Appalachian development plans. When the plans meet final approval, funds are released to implement ARC projects that are consistent with the state plan. The broad objective of these projects is to provide the basic building blocks that enable Appalachian communities to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life.

ARC Strategic Plan

A comprehensive strategic planning process in 2015 involving federal, state, and local officials and citizens resulted in [Investing in Appalachia's Future – ARC Strategic Plan 2016-2020](#), which focuses investments under these five general goals:

1. **Economic Opportunities:** Invest in entrepreneurial and business strategies that strengthen Appalachia's economy.
2. **Ready Workforce:** Improve the education, knowledge, skills, and health of residents to work and succeed in Appalachia.
3. **Critical Infrastructure:** Invest in critical infrastructure – especially broadband; transportation, including the Appalachian Development Highway System; and water/wastewater systems.
4. **Natural and Cultural Assets:** Strengthen Appalachia's community and economic development potential by leveraging the Region's natural and cultural heritage assets.
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.

****Pre-applications must meet one of the ARC Goals defined in the Strategic Plan.****

North Carolina Targeted Investment Priorities

Governor Cooper will engage the resources provided by the ARC to attract more jobs, improve higher educational attainment rates, and support investments that improve the region's health status. Governor Cooper will utilize ARC resources to support the region's ability to respond to the challenges of the 21st century workplace and keep pace with advances in technology. ARC investments in North Carolina will be used to enhance economic opportunity in the region. The Governor believes that economic development requires leadership, planning, and action. Therefore, it is critical for

communities in the region to have access to ARC resources that will allow them to prepare for and then compete for economic development. All ARC investments in North Carolina will assist communities moving towards economic success.

North Carolina ARC Investment Priorities:

- Projects that enhance long-term infrastructure commitments that allow for the creation and retention of jobs;
- Enrichment of partnerships between local industries, k-12 schools, universities, and community colleges to expand and enhance apprenticeships and workforce development opportunities to ensure a pipeline of skilled workers in the region,
- Efforts that support local school systems' ability to enhance STEAM and STEM education opportunities, encourage CTE achievement and certificate or degree attainment;
- Projects that spur economic activity in the health care sector and improve the quality of health care services in rural communities throughout the region; while supporting local efforts to tackle health care challenges, specifically the growing opioid crisis, and;
- Support the deployment of digital infrastructure that allows the region to connect to global markets.

North Carolina ARC Investment Opportunities (Project Types) Overview:

Governor Cooper is focused on ensuring that all North Carolinians are better educated, healthier and have more money in their pockets.

The following are examples of types of projects Governor Cooper would like to support with ARC resources. (Examples are listed by ARC Strategic Investment Goals.)

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

Examples of potential projects include: shared used kitchens, co-package plants, small business incubators, regional agriculture markets, community loan funds, small business plan competitions, and small business mentorship programs.

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

Examples of potential projects include: STEM and STEAM Education programs, career pathway program development, apprenticeships, health care training programs, rural health care clinics, college access programs, and workforce development programs.

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

Examples of potential projects include: downtown Wi-Fi, broadband fiber deployment, access roads,

water and sewer projects that result in the job creation and/or retention, industrial site development, and transportation planning.

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

Examples of potential projects include: local food and farm programs, downtown streetscape projects, downtown revitalization, regional craft and art trails, tourism development, establishment of gateway community programs, and regional tourism development.

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.*

Examples of potential projects include: regional planning projects, community economic development planning, local leadership development training, youth leadership development, and community engagement programs.

Overview of Pre-Application

The North Carolina ARC Program invites pre-applications from eligible applicants. Eligible applicants are local development districts, Indian tribes, states, counties, cities, institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations located in or serving in the Appalachian Region of North Carolina are eligible for funding. North Carolina has 29 counties which encompass the region that includes the following: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Davie, Forsyth, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, McDowell, Macon, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Stokes, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, and Yancey.

Projects are funded in the following areas:

Business Development
Education
Energy
Health

Infrastructure
Leadership Development
Telecommunications
Transportation

Funding and Match Guidance

- The state has set a general guideline that ARC assistance will not exceed \$300,000 for construction projects, \$100,000 for non-construction projects and will constitute no more than 50% of the total project cost. ARC Construction grants require a basic agency to administer the grant. Basic agencies include: EDA, Rural Development, and HUD/CDBG. ARC funds take on the characteristics of the basic agency.
- Matching requirements are 50% for transitional counties, 30% for at-risk counties, and 20% for distressed counties. Federal funds may not exceed 80% of the total project. Contact the NC ARC Program Manager for specific county designations in FY 2019. More information can also be found on-line [here](#).

- To comply with Congressional instructions, the matching requirements in multicounty projects will vary, depending on the designated economic status of the counties involved. Multicounty projects serving fewer than the 29 counties will be computed based on the average of the eligible financing level for the counties involved.
- ARC funds cannot supplant or diminish the level of other funds (federal, state, or local) going into the Appalachian region or the project area. ARC funds cannot replace other funds to continue a project, nor may ARC funds be used to allow the diversion of existing resources to other purposes or to reduce the amount of bonds to be sold to finance local improvements.

Pre-applications for the 2019 Federal Fiscal year will be accepted beginning March 1, 2018. Please submit 10 single-sided applications to the NC ARC Office. Applications must be postmarked by 5:00 P.M. April 16, 2018. Electronic applications are not allowed. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Applications and other resources are available at the following website: <http://www.nccommerce.com/rd/arc>. For questions, please contact Olivia Collier, ARC Program Manager at ocollier@nccommerce.com or by phone at (919) 814-4656.

Pre-applications should be submitted to the attention of:

**Olivia Collier, ARC Program Manager
NC Department of Commerce
Appalachian Regional Commission Program
4346 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-4346**