Appalachian Community Grant Program Guidelines

The Appalachian Community Grant Program was created to fund sustainable, transformative projects in the 32 counties of the Appalachian region of Ohio. Included in Ohio House Bill 377, signed by Governor DeWine on June 28, 2022, the **Appalachian Community Grant Program** will be administered by the Ohio Department of Development ("ODOD"). Projects should be designed to bring about transformational change and be a catalyst for future development by providing generational investments in the Appalachian region.

Each planning and development grant application must address one or more of the following components: infrastructure, workforce, and healthcare.

Eligible Lead Applicants

Eligible Lead Applicants are local units of government or government-related entities such as townships, villages, cities, port authorities, community improvement corporations, county governments or council of governments. Only those local governments or government-related entities **exclusively** within the 32 – Ohio Appalachian counties are eligible.

Educational institutions and nonprofits are also Eligible Lead Applicants. These entities must demonstrate written support from a local unit of government or government-related entity where the project is located. A copy of this support from a local unit of government or government-related entity must be provided with the application.

An Eligible Lead Applicant must operate in, and the project must occur within, the 32-county Appalachian region. (See www.development.ohio.gov/appalachia)

For-profit entities and state-based county agencies are not Eligible Lead Applicants but can establish subrecipient agreements and/or MOUs with Eligible Lead Applicants to work in conjunction on a project for the purposes of the program. A copy of the agreement(s) must be provided within the application.

An Eligible Lead Applicant is the single point of contact and fiscal agent for its respective applications. Eligible Lead Applicants are expected to establish subrecipient agreements with project partners, are responsible for distributing funds to other partners included in the application and must ensure compliance by all project participants.

Availability of Funding

The program may award nearly $500 million in grants to the 32 - Ohio Appalachian counties through **Appalachian Planning Grants** and **Appalachian Development Grants**.

Appalachian Planning Grants: Up to $30 million

Appalachian Planning Grants will be made available through one round of funding and an RFP process. A total of $30 million dollars of funding will be available at the ODOD's Director's discretion based on the demand of the program, with $8 million dedicated to the **Appalachian Technical Assistance Grants**.

- **Appalachian Technical Assistance Grants: $250,000 per county**

These grants will be available for each county to assist Eligible Lead Applicants with technical assistance costs associated with the planning and design of eligible development projects, and/or coordination with the procured planner described below.

ODOD Procured Planner:

ODOD is in the process of retaining dedicated planning professionals to assist the region with the design of eligible projects. Planners will work to meet with all Eligible Lead Applicants and will hold public meetings throughout the region. Additional information on available planning assistance will be available on the [program webpage](#).

Requests for funding outside of the Appalachian **Technical Assistance Grant** may be submitted to the Governor's Office of Appalachia for consideration by emailing appalachia@development.ohio.gov.

Appalachian Development Grants: Round 1 – Up to $50 million

Funding for **Appalachian Development Grants** will be available through multiple development application rounds as needed until all funds have been awarded.

- Round 1: Up to $50 million will be available in the first round for eligible regional projects that have partners in place and can begin implementation within 90 days of receipt of funds.

- There is no cap on Appalachian Development Grants, but program activities must total at least $1 million or more to be eligible for consideration.

- Awarded **Appalachian Development Grant** projects must be complete by October 31, 2026.

Local Development Districts

Eligible Lead Applicants are encouraged to work with the procured planning entity(ies) and their Local Development Districts ("LDDs") to develop plans and applications. LDDs are regional planning organizations for the Ohio 32-county Appalachian region. Ohio's four LDDs, Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission, Buckeye Hills Regional Council, Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association and Eastgate Regional Council of Governments will serve as resource centers in applying for **Appalachian Technical Assistance Grants** and **Appalachian Development Grants**.

LDDs will coordinate and establish partnerships for region wide and transformational projects. The LDDs will serve as a resource to an Eligible Lead Applicant in various capacities. For example, the LDD can serve as a project administrator, coordinate partners for large-scale projects across multiple LDD territories, or serve as the interactive partner with the procured planner on behalf of an Eligible Lead Applicants. The use of the LDDs and the resources provided are not required when applying but are highly encouraged. Projects within the same county or geographical area are encouraged to partner when possible.

Application Rounds and Award Period

Eligible Lead Applicants do not have to apply for an **Appalachian Technical Assistance Grant**, but to apply for an **Appalachian Development Grant**, an independently developed plan specific to the allowable activities outlined in the application must be included and the project must be "shovel ready" and begin within 90 days of being awarded. Development anticipates multiple rounds of funding. During the first round, applicants may apply for either **Appalachian Technical Assistance Grant** or **Appalachian Development Grant.** A second round of applications for **Appalachian Development Grants** will open in late 2023. Additional rounds will be announced if funding is available.

Application Period Round 1:

Appalachian Technical Assistance Grant	Application Open – November 2, 2022 Application Deadline – December 9, 2022 Announce First Round Awards – Early 2023
Appalachian Development Grant	Application Open – November 2, 2022 Application Deadline – December 9, 2022 Announce First Round Awards – Early 2023

Application Period Round 2:

Appalachian Development Grant	Application Open – November 2023 Application Deadline – December 2023 Announce Second Round Awards – Early 2024

Additional Application Round*	Details will be available on ODOD's website: development.ohio.gov/appalachia.

**pending available funding*

Eligible Technical Assistance Grant Projects

Appalachian Technical Assistance Grant applications must identify opportunities for transformational change, and are required to include one or more of the following:

- An infrastructure component;
- A healthcare component;
- A workforce component.

Eligible Lead Applicants may use awarded funds to defray costs associated with planning, researching, and writing development proposals for a project or group of projects that account for the following criteria:

- Region-wide scale or impact;
- Evidence based;
- Complement current and catalyze future economic development;
- Includes a private-public partnership;
- Is economically sustainable; and
- Transformative to the region.

Eligible Development Projects

Appalachian Development Grant projects must be transformational in nature and are required to include one or more of the following:

- An infrastructure component;
- A healthcare component;
- A workforce component.

Applicants may use awarded funds for transformational development projects that account for the following criteria:

- Region-wide scale or impact;
- Evidence based;
- Complement current and catalyze future economic development;
- Includes a private-public partnership;
- Is economically sustainable; and

- Transformative to the region.

Transformational change is not a single building project or a single community project, but part of a larger-scale project in the region. Projects must influence economic and social well-being and instigate an increase in economic activity.

Eligible Activities

Examples of eligible activities that could be considered part of a transformational development project include, but are not limited to:

Downtown Redevelopment/ Infrastructure
• Main street improvements • Downtown redevelopment • Renovation of historic theaters, community art, historical and cultural assets. • Large downtown structural improvements (lighting, street and sidewalks, accessibility, and infrastructure improvements) • Connecting state parks to local communities and/or county and regional bike trails to promote access to healthy outdoor recreation • Downtown murals • Historic buildings renovations • Mixed-use redevelopment • Public/private partnerships • Downtown shared office space • Large-scale economic development site infrastructure • Recycling/Materials Management • Other activity expenses approved on a case-by-case basis by Development.

Healthcare
• School-based health clinics • Expansion of mental health access through telemedicine • Recovery-to-work projects • Address substance use disorder • Establish or expand farmer markets • Maternal/Infant Vitality • Other activity expenses approved on a case-by-case basis by Development

Workforce
• Fund in-demand, industry driven training programs • Upskill current workers and develop pathways in partnership with local business • Establish entrepreneurial and remote workforce downtown centers • Prioritized training that will build the workforce and capacity of communities making the application. Examples include but are not limited to trades, fire and safety training, entrepreneurship, broadband deployment. • Other activity expenses approved on a case-by-case basis by Development.

Eligible Costs

For both **Appalachian Technical Assistance Grants** and **Appalachian Development Grants**, the following are examples of reimbursable, eligible costs:
- Administrative costs: reasonable personnel and staff time, travel, supplies, and materials;
- Operating costs: Internet, utilities;
- Preliminary engineering;
- Legal fees;
- Grant writers;
- Community planners and/or consultants;
- Other eligible costs as approved by ODOD

Administrative costs reimbursed must adhere to all uniform guidance and may not exceed 3% of the total project amount for an **Appalachian Development Grant**.

Eligible Lead Applicants are encouraged to solicit and competitively select consultants prior to submitting applications for **Appalachian Development Grants**.

All **Appalachian Technical Assistance Grants and the procured planner** plans must be completed by October 31, 2023.

To be eligible for reimbursement all project work must be completed by October 31, 2026. Eligible Lead Applicants will have until the end of September 2026 to submit a final disbursement request. A final project report is required by November 1, 2026. Additional reporting information will be provided after awards are granted.

Total project awards are determined at the discretion of ODOD.

Ineligible Costs

Administrative costs related to **Technical Assistance Grant** application preparation are not eligible.

Costs incurred prior to the grant period are ineligible for reimbursement. ODOD has the right to not fund all activities included in an application. Ineligible or duplicative activity costs from applications will not be funded. ODOD may request additional documentation in support of the reasonable and necessary costs.

Funds will not be allowed to establish ongoing permanent operating expenses for advocacy of any kind, or for projects related to jails, courthouses, municipal, other government or school buildings (other than school-based healthcare). **Appalachian Community Grant Program** funds may not be used for broadband, water, and/or sewer projects unless the infrastructure is integral to complete a component of the project. For example, the cost to provide broadband for a telemedicine project in a new or refurbished downtown building *may* be eligible based on the transformative impact of the project.

Other Funding Sources

Local matching funds are not required. However, applications that include additional federal, state, and/or local funding may receive additional points in the scoring process.

Partners

Appalachian Development Grant applications that align and leverage multiple partners and resources (federal, state, local, nonprofit, and private sector) and projects that integrate multiple economic development systems and communities may receive additional points in the scoring process.

Eligible Lead Applicants should apply an equity lens to their projects by including intentional strategies that expand access, participation, and representation to underrepresented communities in the activities and investments. Applicants that have modeled this inclusion may receive additional points in the scoring process.

Partnerships are strongly encouraged. LDDs and state partner agencies can play a vital role in developing strong partner projects.

State agency partners could include:

Infrastructure
- Ohio Arts Council
- ODOD
- Ohio History Connection
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Department of Transportation
- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
- Ohio Public Works Commission
- Ohio Water Development Authority

Health
- Ohio Department of Aging
- Ohio Department of Agriculture
- Ohio Department of Education
- ODOD
- Ohio Department of Health
- Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
- Ohio Department of Public Safety
- Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
- Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

Workforce
- Ohio Department of Education
- ODOD
- Ohio Department of Higher Education
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
- Office of Workforce Transformation
- State Library Board
- Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
- Ohio Department of Public Safety
- Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
- Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

Subrecipient Agreements

The Eligible Lead Applicant may utilize a subrecipient agreement with its partners. A subrecipient agreement between the Eligible Lead Applicant and other end users (i.e., other local governments, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, etc.) must be submitted as part of the **Appalachian Development Grant** application, if applicable.

A subrecipient agreement must include the following: scope of work, budget and balances, records and reports, compliance with federal and state laws, and suspension and termination provisions.

Subrecipient agreements are not required for **Technical Assistance Grant Applications**.

Application Process

On November 2, 2022, the applications for the **Technical Assistance Grant** and the $50 million **Appalachian Development Grant** will be made available. To access an application, Eligible Lead Applicants must create an OH|ID account. For more information on creating an OH|ID, please click here.

Eligible Lead applicants will be required to provide the following on each application:
- Applicant contact information (including indicating a primary contact)
- Applicant Unique Entity Identifier Number (UEI)
- Applicant FIN Number
- Applicant EIN Number
- Applicant OAKS ID
- County/Counties represented
- Project Information
- Project Description
- Budget
  - Requested estimated costs per project activities and partner receiving funding
  - Any other partner funding sources included in total project
  - Budget narrative
  - Budget output and outcomes
- Documentation
  - A comprehensive plan that lays out the activities in the **Appalachian Development Grant**
  - Maps
  - Subrecipient agreements between partners (**Appalachian Development Grant** only)
  - Documented Community Support
  - If one or more counties for the project are designated as *Distressed* or *At-Risk* by the Appalachian Regional Commission or *Persistent Poverty* by the Economic Development Administration
  - Other supporting documentation

Application Scoring

Appalachian Technical Assistance Grant applications will be worth a total of 100 points; a minimum of 60 points is required to be considered for an award.

Appalachian Development Grant applications will be worth a total of 150 points; a minimum of 90 points is required to be considered for an award.

View the scoring rubric.

Award Process

Upon submission of a complete application, the Eligible Lead Applicant will receive an email from ODOD confirming that the application has been received. Submission of an application does not ensure the Eligible Lead Applicant will be awarded funds. Applications will be reviewed for completeness and scored. ODOD may request additional information from the Eligible Lead Applicant. Eligible Lead Applicants will have 5 business days from the date of the request to submit the requested information. If the additional information is not submitted within the requested timeframe, the application may be ineligible for funding during that round. This "cure period" is to resolve outstanding questions or issues identified by ODOD. An empty or incomplete application that was used to create a "placeholder" with the expectation the application would be completed during the cure period will be deemed ineligible.

Awardees will be notified by ODOD of their award. ODOD will also notify Eligible Lead Applicants if an application is not receiving an award. Prior to a grant document being provided to the Eligible Lead Applicant to be executed by the awardee or dispersing funds, the ODOD must obtain approval of the grant by the Ohio Controlling Board. The applicant may be asked to attend the Ohio Controlling Board meeting with a representative of ODOD.

Compliance Areas

Grant Funds are part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. Use of these grant funds is subject to 2 CFR 200, as applicable and the U.S. Treasury Final Rule effective April 1, 2022.

Updates to program Guidelines

Changes and/or corrections to any part to the program guidelines may be made from time to time and will be provided by ODOD to the Eligible Lead Applicants and/or posted on the ODOD's website. ODOD reserves the right to make exceptions to these guidelines on a case-by-case basis for any reason.

Definitions

"Additional funding sources" means funding from other state, local and private sources that have been committed to a project.

"Educational institutions" means (1) city, local, and exempted village school districts; (2) joint vocational school districts; (3) educational service centers; (4) chartered nonpublic schools; and (5) institutions of higher education.

"Eligible Lead Applicant" means the entity that is responsible for the grant application and project. The Eligible Lead Applicant will directly receive the funds to be distributed with their partners through subrecipient agreements.

"Evidence based" means the concept for the project has clearly been proven and is based on strong evidence.

 "Other funding sources" means federal, state, local or private funds that support the project directly and leverage the investment. This includes in-kind, cash, or loan match funds.

"Public-\private partnership" means public and private partners work together to accomplish at least of the one of the activities in the grant application.

"Subrecipient agreement" means the contract between Lead Applicants and partners that describes the various funding agreements, scope of work, reporting and other compliance necessary for the grant to be completed.

"Underrepresented Communities" means communities that have limited capacity or access to resources.