



Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative: Federal Fiscal Year 2019 – Request for Proposals (RFP) for Project Grants

Executive Summary

RFP release date: January 7, 2019

Proposal due date: April 10, 2019 at 5:00 PM (EDT)

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 2019 (FY19) funding.

The POWER Initiative is a congressionally funded initiative that targets 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 is organized to provide a general overview of the POWER Initiative, as well as the specific requirements needed to complete a POWER FY19 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: <https://www.arc.gov/funding/POWER.asp>.

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A. ARC OVERVIEW

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. 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 FY19 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. POWER Initiative Overview

POWER is a congressionally funded initiative that targets 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 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.

In order 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 promoting regional economic growth and diversification, new job creation, and re-employment opportunities for displaced coal-economy workers;
- 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, targeting assistance through competitively awarded grants to 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.

2. POWER FY19 Grants

The POWER FY19 grant competition will have one submission deadline: **April 10, 2019 at 5:00 PM (EDT)**.

¹ A map of the ARC Region can be found [here](#).

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.

POWER FY19 will have approximately \$45 million available. ARC expects to make individual implementation grant awards in amounts up to \$1.5 million. Of the \$45 million total, a minimum of \$15 million has been set aside to fund broadband deployment projects. For further guidance on broadband applications, please refer to Section 3.

POWER Technical Assistance Grants

In addition to POWER implementation grants, applications for technical assistance grants up to \$50,000 are available in FY19 to assist communities and regions in developing plans and strategies for transforming the structure of their local economies. Technical assistance grants are also particularly helpful when planning 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 technical assistance applicants should be prepared to identify other potential sources of federal, state, local, or private sector funding.

Please note: previously submitted POWER applications that were not selected for funding must be resubmitted to receive consideration for POWER FY19 funds.

Prior to submission of the application, **applicants are required to contact the state program managers** of the states in which the project's activities and impacts are located. See <https://www.arc.gov/about/StateProgramManagers.asp> for the complete list.

In addition to the requirements described in this RFP and online at <https://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*](#).

3. POWER FY19 – Broadband

For POWER FY19, a minimum of \$15 million has been set aside to fund broadband deployment projects that enhance access to and the use of 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, maximum 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.

Below is special guidance for broadband deployment applications:

Fiber Deployment Projects

- Priority given to projects with a completed feasibility study;
- Priority given to broadband fiber deployment in central business district designated areas and industrial parks;
- Priority given to networks and projects that will be operational upon the completion of construction;
- ARC will not support sole fiber-to-the-home projects; and
- ARC will not support deployment in areas that already have adequate broadband availability.

Wireless Deployment Projects

- Priority given to projects with a completed feasibility study;
- Can be used for business and mixed-use deployment;
- Can use a variety of wireless technologies (e.g., fixed wireless/white space/LTE);
- Priority given to networks and projects that will be operational upon the completion of construction; and
- ARC will not support deployment in areas that already have adequate broadband availability.

Other Broadband Project Considerations

POWER applications that seek to utilize existing broadband service or increase its adoption through community outreach efforts or innovative economic development initiatives will follow the same funding guidelines as other implementation projects with grant amounts up to \$1.5 million that are not drawn from the \$15 million set-aside. Examples of these include:

- Business development activities on how broadband can be used to increase local/regional/national/international business activity;
- Community outreach efforts to increase broadband use and adoption;
- Unique distance-learning and other telecom-oriented health practice enhancements.

Broadband Feasibility Studies

POWER FY19 will also accept applications for projects that seek to understand the feasibility of broadband deployment through technical assistance grants up to \$50,000. These grants will not be drawn from the \$15 million set-aside. Examples of potential broadband TA grants include:

- Provide an inventory of broadband assets already in place;
- Used to assess community broadband requirements for bandwidth needs;
- Determine best technologies to meet the coal impacted community needs;
- Provide cost estimates for different deployment strategies; and
- Provide an analysis of alternative deployment routes. This should include an analysis of existing providers who may already have ownership interests in proposed routes and, if relevant, an assessment of pole attachment costs for those routes.

For additional information on ARC Broadband Services investments, please contact Mark DeFalco at mdefalco@arc.gov.

4. POWER Goals, Objectives, Priorities, and Funding Principles

This section contains information describing the POWER FY19 goals, objectives, priorities, and funding principles. Potential applicants should review this information carefully before submitting a proposal.

Background on 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 over the next five years. 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.

POWER Objectives

The primary objective of POWER FY19 grants is to invest in economic and workforce development projects and activities that will produce one, or any combination, of the following outcomes:

- **Economic Diversification:** Diversify the commercial and industrial bases of local and regional economies;
- **Job Creation:** Create high-quality, well-paying jobs in new and/or existing industries;
- **Capital Investment:** Attract new sources of job-creating investment (both public and private); and
- **Workforce Development and Reemployment Opportunities:** Provide 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.

Applicants are encouraged to leverage a variety of program resources from multiple sources, both public and private, in order to enhance the ability of coal-impacted communities and regions to successfully address these POWER objectives.

POWER Investment Priorities

The POWER Investment Priorities build upon the ARC’s Strategic Investment Goals and are summarized and described in ARC Resolution 764. As adopted by ARC and its state partners, ARC Resolution 764 requires that the focus of ARC’s POWER Initiative for FY19 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 below list of POWER investment priorities will be considered for funding, but all applications will be scored on their ability to address one of these priority areas:

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. This can include letters from local businesses and business groups expressing a need or labor market analyses conducted by federal sources.

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.
- **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 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.

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.

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 as well as job training programs that focus on those in recovery.

- 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.

POWER FY19 funding will continue to target coal-impacted communities. Proposed projects should demonstrate direct or indirect coal-impacts as a threshold criteria for POWER funding consideration.

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 give preference to 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. ARC POWER implementation grants are to range from about \$400,000 to no more than \$1.5 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).
- **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 FY19 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.
- **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.
- **Outcome-driven:** 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.
- **Sustainability:** Applicants should speak directly to the sustainability of the proposed project through robust planning and a stated commitment to sustaining the project's efforts beyond ARC's investment.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply the POWER FY19 Goals, Objectives, 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.

C. POWER FY19 AWARD INFORMATION

1. Availability of Funding

POWER FY19 will have approximately \$45 million available. Of that total, a minimum of \$15 million has been set aside to fund broadband deployment projects.

- ARC expects to make individual grant awards in amounts up to \$1.5 million for each project it awards within the congressionally-defined Appalachian Region. 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.
- 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 <https://www.arc.gov/POWER>.
- ARC may also choose to make awards via cooperative agreements.

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.

2. Period of Performance

Applicants can determine the required time period necessary to meet the objectives of their projects. The period of performance for awards under POWER FY19 may be up to three years (36 months) if warranted by the size and scope of the project.

D. POWER FY19 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 industries³ 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 FY19 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 <https://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, 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 federal sources that may include, but are not limited to, the following sources:

- Department of Commerce
 - Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), <http://bea.gov/>
 - U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>
- Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), <http://www.bls.gov/>
- Energy Information Administration (EIA), <https://www.eia.gov/>
- Department of the Interior
 - Mine Safety Health Administration (MSHA), <http://www.msha.gov/OpenGovernmentData/OGIMSHA.asp>
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), American Indian Population and Labor Force Reports <http://www.bia.gov/WhatWeDo/Knowledge/Reports/index.htm>.

³ 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.

2. Eligible Applicants

Eligible ARC applicants are:

- Local Development Districts;
- Indian Tribes or a consortium of Indian Tribes;
- 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 FY19 funds only if they are due to close out their POWER Implementation projects within six months of the submission deadline (April 10th). A section has been added to the application for current POWER grantees to provide a thorough status update on their existing projects. Applications should include an expansion of geography or increased scope of work with an existing concept or a proposal with a new concept. POWER FY19 funds will not be released until current projects are successfully closed out.

Previous ARC POWER technical assistance grant recipients that have developed an implementation project may apply for POWER FY19 implementation funding.

In addition, ARC has additional geographic eligibility requirements. To be eligible for ARC funding, applicants must propose to serve and benefit a portion of the Appalachian Region as defined by the ARDA of 1965, as amended. A map and a description of the ARC Region can be found online at: <https://www.arc.gov/POWER>.

3. Cost Sharing or Matching

Under POWER FY19, 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 federal⁴, 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 FY19 classification. A table summarizing ARC’s economic designations and the maximum ARC share for each Appalachian county can be found online at: <https://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;

⁴ 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.

- 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.

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; and
- Chambers of commerce, industry and trade associations, local and regional business owners, and other representatives from the private sector.

E. POWER FY19 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Request a POWER FY19 Application

The electronic POWER FY19 application will be available on **February 1, 2019**. Applicants may access the application electronically online at: <https://power.arc.gov>.

Please note: previously submitted POWER applications that were not selected for funding must be resubmitted to receive consideration for POWER FY19 funds.

2. Content and Form of POWER FY19 Application

POWER FY19 grant applications follow ARC's standard application policies and procedures.

Application narratives are limited to 10 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 **strongly encouraged 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.

Applications from organizations that received a previous POWER 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 selected for funding.

Additional ARC project application requirements and guidance are described in detail at the ARC POWER home page (<https://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

All POWER FY19 applications are due **April 10, 2019 at 5:00PM EDT.**

Applications must be completed and submitted by the above deadline to be considered for funding.

5. Application Submission Instructions

After February 1, 2019, POWER FY19 project applications (and related attachments) can be submitted electronically via the POWER Initiative Portal available at: <https://power.arc.gov>.

NOTE: This online application portal has been established for POWER FY19 project **applications** only.

Prior to submission of the application, every applicant are 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 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 FY19 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: <https://www.arc.gov/POWER>.

F. POWER FY19 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

POWER applications will first be reviewed by the state alternate(s) 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 representatives, 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, under 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 representative(s). The award decision of the ARC Federal Co-Chair and the respective state representative(s) is final.

G. POWER FY19 AWARD ADMINISTRATION

General management and administration requirements 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.

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

H. ARC AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

ARC strongly encourages interested applicants to contact ARC state program managers and ARC staff with any questions they 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 these to POWER@arc.gov.

I. GENERAL DISCLOSURES

POWER FY19 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 award a contract, or to procure, or to contract for services or supplies. 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, and not necessarily to the lowest cost proposers. 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 the ARC to do so.

Please note that ARC will not reimburse for any other costs associated with the preparation of a response to this RFP. Any ARC contracts awarded to work directly with consultants or consulting organizations will likely be a FIRM FIXED-PRICE CONTRACT or a cooperative agreement. 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.