



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

Request for Proposals
for the
Appalachian Teaching Project

Questions concerning this RFP must be received by email to ATP@arc.gov no later than 12:00 p.m. ET on **MARCH 26, 2021**. ARC reserves the right to not answer questions received after that time.

Proposals are due on or before 5:00 p.m. ET
APRIL 9, 2021

ATP@arc.gov

Summary

The Appalachian Regional Commission (“ARC”) is seeking proposals from colleges and universities (“Institutions”) across the [Appalachian Region](#) to participate in the [Appalachian Teaching Project](#) (“ATP”). As part of the ATP, each participating Institution offers at least one for-credit course in which students address the question, “How do we support community economic development to help build a sustainable future and close the socioeconomic gap between Appalachia and the rest of the nation?”

Administered by East Tennessee State University Center of Excellence for Appalachian Studies and Services, the ATP engages students from up to 16 colleges and universities in place-based learning experiences in which they practice community economic development firsthand. Following completion of their community-based research project, the ATP provides a forum in which students share their work with their peers, ARC administration and staff, and invited guests, including community partners and university administrators.

Through this model, the ATP directly invests in one of Appalachia’s most precious resources: its future leaders. By promoting student engagement with Appalachian communities, fostering leadership development, and bringing students, faculty, and leaders together to share their ideas, this project directly supports ARC’s mission to “Innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia.”

Scope of Work

Each Institution must work with a local community partner(s) within the Appalachian Region to identify a research project that addresses critical challenges and/or opportunities that affect that community’s economic development. The faculty director will then develop a community-based student project that addresses the community challenge and/or opportunity and is designed to help the community build a sustainable future. In addition to providing an invaluable experience for the students, the ATP also gives them – as well as the community partners they’re working with – firsthand knowledge of ARC, its work in the Region.

While we will accept multiple proposals from an Institution, no more than one proposal from an Institution will be selected for participation. We encourage interested faculty to work with others at their Institution to develop their proposal. Interested faculty may also collaborate with other Institutions to jointly develop a project with a community partner(s). If Institutions are working together, they must apply together. There is not an increased budget for the subaward of multiple Institutions are applying together.

Proposed projects must meet the guidelines, goals, and outcomes identified below, providing concrete deliverables. Projects must go beyond collecting folklore,

ethnographic fieldwork, and volunteer or service-learning activities; they must exhibit demonstrable impact on the capacity of the students, the institution, the community partner, and/or the community to promote economic development and sustainability.

If COVID guidance allows, students and faculty will convene in Washington, D.C. on December 3-4, 2021 to share their community-based projects. The conference will consist of the following activities: a fifteen-minute formal presentation of project outcomes by the students from each participating Institution; opportunities for discussion and questions; participation in poster sessions; open time for students and faculty to visit the offices of governmental representatives; and a planning meeting of faculty directors and ARC officials to discuss the project, its outcomes, and future strategies. If COVID guidance does not allow the conference to take place in person, it will be held virtually.

Following the conference, each participating institution will submit a final report on the project outcomes by May 31, 2022. Final reports must document how the project met all required guidelines, goals, and outcomes stated in the proposal and Scope of Work.

Project Goals

The ATP is designed to accomplish the following goals in support of the ARC mission and strategic plan.

1. To promote student research projects that focus on Appalachian communities, preferably in one or more of the [ARC-designated Distressed or At-Risk counties](#). These projects must involve direct, active participation and engagement with the community. For continuity of projects and relationships, some institutions will work with the same community more than one year. Occasionally, some communities may be selected because they constitute distressed populations within counties that are not formally labeled as distressed or at-risk.
2. To provide opportunities for students, most of whom are Appalachian natives and/or residents, to experience various parts of the Region and the work of the ARC.
3. To provide opportunities for students to develop leadership, civic capacity, and communication skills.
4. To increase student and community awareness of the mission and work of the ARC and the goals of its strategic plan.
5. To promote projects that address one or more of the goals of ARC strategic plan. ARC also sets forth specific objectives that support each of the goals, which may be found in the [ARC Project Guidelines](#). While all ATP proposals will support Goal 5, ARC encourages projects that also specifically address Goals 1-4, including the following issues: substance abuse recovery, business

development and entrepreneurship, broadband and technology, and workforce development.

- **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.
6. To provide opportunities for students to share their work, develop leaderships skills, and build professional networks through a presentation to civic groups, elected officials, and/or at a regional or national conference.

Project Outcomes

Projects are expected to have a demonstrable impact on community economic development and sustainability, and capacity building through development of student leadership and active partnerships. Therefore, each project should address the question, “What changes do you expect to occur in the community as a result of this project?” Final reports from each institution should document evidence of the project’s impact, through quantitative and/or qualitative data. Such evidence might include, for example:

- Development or growth of active partnerships between communities and institutions of higher education in the Region.
- Feedback from community partners, community leaders, or other community members.
- Feedback from student participants.
- Development of plans, priorities, or recommendations that the community may utilize in promoting sustainable development.
- Community projects, initiatives, events, or other actions and deliverables that are the direct or indirect results of the students’ work, or those that are significantly impacted by the students’ work.

Learning Outcomes

Each Institution must offer a for-credit academic course that includes an approved community-based project. Each course must support the broad learning objectives of the ATP, which are to help students to (a) develop leadership, communication and civics skills; (b) gain firsthand experience in asset-based community development; and (c) increase student and community awareness of the mission and work of ARC and the goals of its strategic plan. Though each course will be different, depending on its academic discipline and the community challenge it addresses, each course must include the following core requirements:

- Students will engage in fieldwork with at least one community partner during the semester (some institutions may choose to work with multiple partners). The project cannot be strictly classroom-based.
- Students will create a poster summarizing their project and present it at the annual ATP conference.
- Students will make a formal oral presentation on their project, accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, at the annual ATP conference. All students who attend the conference must participate in the oral presentation.
- Students will make a final oral presentation on their project to their community partner(s).
- In addition to the presentation to the community partner(s), students must participate in at least one of the following presentation options:
 - Make a presentation to at least one additional civic organization or to elected officials within the community (this presentation can take place at the same time as the final presentation to the community partner described above).
 - Participate in a poster session or panel discussion, or present a complete session at the Appalachian Studies Association's Annual Conference in spring 2022.
 - Make a presentation on the project at another relevant regional or national conference.

Subaward Budget Information

Institutions selected to participate will receive a subaward of a maximum of \$4,750.

Expenses Allowed

- Travel to community partner events/meetings
- Supplies (such as creation of the poster) not to exceed \$200.00 without prior authorization
- Travel to the ATP Conference in Washington, DC, including:
 - Mileage/Airfare
 - Hotel Rooms
 - Hotel Parking

- Per Diem to cover meals not provided at the conference
- Metro Passes
- Admission fees for approved group events (plays, exhibits, etc.)
- Travel to other conferences where the students will present ATP research/posters

Expenses Disallowed

- Indirect costs
- Salaries (faculty, support staff, student workers, etc.)
- Student travel to conferences where students are NOT presenting ATP research/posters.
- Equipment, computers, etc.
- Food (receptions, open houses, etc.) that is not related to travel

Request for Proposals

The proposal should provide the following information:

Project Summary

The proposal should summarize the institution's plan to work with a local community partner(s) and the community-based student project that addresses the community problem. It should also include:

- How the proposal aligns with Project Goals and [ARC Investment Strategies](#);
- Project Outcomes, including projected positive impact on the community
- Learning Outcomes

Course Syllabus

The proposal should include a draft of the course syllabus (or syllabi if multiple courses are part of the proposal) that addresses how the class would approach the project and meet the stated objectives.

Letter(s) of Support

The proposal should include letters of support from community partners that will be participating in the project.

Budget

Institutions selected to participate will receive a subaward of a maximum of \$4,750. Proposals should include a brief itemized budget describing how the institution would plan use the subaward to fund the project.

Curriculum Vitae

Curriculum vitae of participating faculty should be included in the proposal.

Proposal Format

ARC desires to minimize submission of superfluous RFP material. Therefore, responding Institutions are instructed to organize their responses according to the following format:

- The proposal narrative should not exceed 15 typewritten pages tabbed by category. Font must be Times New Roman and can be no smaller than 10 typeset. Two to three (2-3) pages per section as follows:
 - Project Summary
 - Course Syllabus
 - Letter(s) of Support
 - Budget
 - Curriculum Vitae
- Pages should be numbered consecutively and identify the Institution on each.
- Each proposal should be accompanied by a title page specifying the name of the RFP being responded to (“Appalachian Teaching Project”).

Submission Procedures

The deadline for submissions in response to this RFP is 5:00 p.m. ET, DATE.

Please submit a PDF copy of your response to ATP@arc.gov.

- Telephone or fax responses will not be accepted for this RFP;
- Submissions MUST be sent via email;
- Responses or unsolicited amendments will not be accepted after the closing date and time;
- Requests for time extensions will not be considered.

Review and Evaluation Process

The Appalachian Teaching Project team will review and evaluate the responses based on the following criteria:

- Application contains the requested information;
- The Institution’s commitment to the Appalachian Region;
- The community partner(s) location within the ARC thirteen-state region;
- Demonstrated need and underlying rationale for the proposed project and its alignment to the ARC Investment Strategies; and
- The Institution’s connection to local economic development and ARC mission.

After review, ARC will select up to 16 institutions to participate in the Appalachian Teaching Project. ARC plans to notify schools of their proposal status by May 14, 2021.