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POWER Initiative Evaluation:
The Value of POWER

BUILDING CAPACITY, OPPORTUNITIES, AND SUSTAINABILITY

September 2022 | Year 4 Final Report

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Executive Summary

Since 2015, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has funded 395 projects[1] under the Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative to empower Appalachian communities to create more vibrant, diverse, and sustainable economies. To understand successes, challenges, and lessons learned through implementation, as well as to examine results of POWER projects, ARC secured Chamberlin/Dunn (C/D) as third-party evaluator beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019.

In this fourth year of evaluation (FY22), the team focused primarily on closed projects, to obtain additional data on projects post-close (outputs and outcomes), as well as to gather feedback from grantees with closed projects related to their perceptions of longer-term impacts, communities targeted and served, and measurement.

Year 4/FY22 focused on five primary evaluation questions, including:

- To what extent did projects achieve outputs and outcomes? To what extent were outputs and outcomes achieved at project close versus one to three years after?
- What outcomes or impacts have been sustained after project close?
- What are the characteristics of individuals and communities served by POWER?
- To what extent have POWER projects served traditionally underserved communities in Appalachia and/or advanced equity?
- To what extent did POWER projects have unanticipated outcomes not originally targeted for measurement? What factors may have influenced this?

The evaluation team also included several process-related questions specifically about POWER project measures (outputs and outcomes), including:

- How might ARC collect and assess post-close performance metrics in the future?
- Other than outputs and outcomes identified for the project, were there other outputs and outcomes grantees feel would have been more appropriate? If so, what are these and how might ARC measure them?
- To what extent was the reporting process effective and user-friendly, and what recommendations might grantees have for ways in which ARC might better standardize and systematize the reporting experience?

To answer these questions, evaluators conducted interviews with closed project grantees (those closed two or more years at the commencement of the evaluation); an online survey for grantees with projects closed more recently; and a review of outputs and outcomes both at close and post-close.

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[1]As of August 2022. https://www.arc.gov/arcs-power-initiative

Key Findings

POWER projects have served and improved hundreds of thousands of individuals and tens of thousands of businesses, organizations, households, and communities, as well as contributing to job creation and infrastructure.

The combined at-close and post-close outputs and outcomes for closed projects included in this evaluation (n=168) indicate that POWER programming has collectively:

- Served nearly **208,700 individuals** (participants, patients, students, or workers) and improved more than **160,000 individuals** (typically defined as obtaining degrees, credentials, jobs, improved knowledge/skills, improved health outcomes, and/or completing programming).
- Served nearly **13,800 businesses and organizations** and improved over **8,100 businesses and organizations** (typically defined as improving revenue/sales, efficiency, cost savings, and/or knowledge and skills)
- Leveraged over **$1B in private investment** and **increased sales** for project participants (businesses and organizations) by over **$54M**
- Served over **12,600 households and communities** and improved nearly **12,000 households and communities** (through broadband subscriptions; increased capacity, revenues, tourism, etc., and/or access to programming, plans, or research and data)
- Contributed to nearly **21,000 jobs created or retained** and over **1,500 businesses created**
- Generated over **5,500 new visitors**, nearly **500 plans/reports** (including broadband studies, feasibility studies, strategic plans, and research reports) and **60 new programs**
- Renovated or developed over **580,000 sq. ft. of property** and over **625,000 linear feet** of fiber optic cable, pavement, or access road

The majority of POWER projects with post-close data were successful at meeting or exceeding output and outcome targets.

Of the 68 projects with targets set for both outputs and outcomes, 60% (n=41) met or exceeded targets for each of their selected outputs and outcomes; 12% (n=8) met targets for each selected output (but not each outcome); and 6% (n=4) met targets for each selected outcome (but not each output). While 22% (n=15) did not meet targets for all of their selected outputs or outcomes, just four projects did not meet targets for *any* selected output or outcome. For projects with output targets only (n=35), all but two (94%) met or exceeded targets for all selected outputs.

Among specific outputs, post-close grantees appeared less likely to meet or exceed set targets for square feet (60%, 3/5 meeting targets), workers/trainees served (69%, 11/16), and students served (73%, 8/11). For outcomes, post-close grantees appeared less likely to meet or exceed targets for workers/trainees improved (56%, 9/16 meeting targets); students improved (64%, 7/11), and leveraged private investment (64%, 14/22). Some grantees who participated in interviews did acknowledge that they struggled with identifying targets that would appear ambitious to reviewers during the application review phase, but also were feasible and realistic for the scope of work.

Grantees noted a number of long-term impacts for closed projects, including sustainability, capacity building (for their own organizations and their regions or communities), and the ability to change mindsets.

Grantees participating in this evaluation described long-term impacts post-close, including project sustainability and in some cases, expansion (to new programming or regions); the ability to create new or enhanced regional ecosystems, including building and maintaining impactful partnerships and increasing community capacity; continued support for growth and new career opportunities for regional businesses and individuals; building organizational capacity and momentum for grantee organizations, such as enhancing reputations, changing focus, or being set up for much larger funding opportunities; and changing mindsets in the region, including building interest and awareness of never-before considered career pathways, belief in the digital economy and remote work, and identifying new ways of engaging economic development.

Nearly all evaluation participants reported feeling that they were able to serve their targeted communities or regions as defined in their initial proposals, but few indicated targeting specific underserved populations.

Most grantees who participated in interviews and surveys noted they were successful in serving the counties, communities, and/or states they planned to serve. Service areas generally were selected based on their status as distressed areas and their needing services, such as training programs, entrepreneurial coaching and business services, access to capital, and economic diversification opportunities. Very few grantees indicated they specifically targeted any traditionally underserved populations (e.g., by race/ethnicity, disability, veteran status, gender, etc.), instead noting that they felt the entire area was underserved by virtue of experiencing economic distress. Those that did target specific populations mentioned members of the BIPOC community, formerly incarcerated individuals or those in recovery from substance use disorder, and women, in areas and sectors in which women had been traditionally underrepresented (e.g., STEM).

Project definitions of "improved" metrics for outcomes, particularly for communities and organizations, do not always appear to demonstrate measurable changes.

ARC defines outcome metrics for "improved" (businesses, communities, participants, students, and workers/trainees, in particular) as showing measurable improvements, leaving necessary and appropriate flexibility for grantees to define what measurable improvements mean for the diverse projects proposed. However, in some cases, especially for communities and organizations, projects examined in this evaluation appeared to define "improved" in the same way as "served" – i.e., participating in the project or having access to services, or being covered by plans or reports for planning projects, without necessarily demonstrating improvements as a result.

Some grantees included in this evaluation were unclear about requirements on follow-up reporting, as well as how to report follow-up numbers for projects with additional funding (either through POWER or other sources).

While the majority of grantees who participated in interviews or surveys for this evaluation indicated that POWER's reporting processes were fairly easy and that they felt confident

they could report data up to three years post-close, some indicated they had been unclear that they were expected to be able to follow up after the grant closed. Some who did conduct follow up data collection expressed some challenges with tracking participants multiple years after the project. Finally, some that had received follow-on grants (whether from POWER or other sources, such as USDA) were somewhat unclear on how to count beneficiaries as part of follow-up from the original project but avoid double-counting in the follow-on or new project.

Recommendations

- **Definitions of "improved".** ARC may wish to consider whether it should provide more clarity on the meaning of "improved", especially for communities, where it may be difficult yet important to measure improvements beyond project participation or access to services. ARC may also wish to consider whether it is appropriate for planning projects to include outcomes; though these projects are of great value to the region, their primary purpose is to produce a plan or similar document (output) and not typically to achieve a measurable change (outcome).

- **Guidance on setting targets**. Generally, grantees with post-close data were relatively successful at meeting targets set in their original proposals, but it appeared to be more difficult to meet targets for some measures over others (e.g., students and workers/trainees served and improved and leveraged private investment). Where appropriate, it may be beneficial for ARC to provide additional guidance for grantees in setting targets that are ambitious yet feasible, based on the capacity, experience, and resources available to the grantees and partners.

- **Additional clarity on follow-up reporting.** ARC may wish to consider ways to provide additional guidance, clarity, and effective practices for post-close follow up (including ensuring grantees understand the obligation, as well as have processes in place for doing so), and providing clarity, definitions, and guidelines around how to accurately count beneficiaries in the long-term for projects with follow-on funding.

- **Considerations for targeting traditionally underserved populations.** The majority of POWER grantees that participated in the evaluation did not specifically target traditionally underserved populations. If ARC desires more POWER projects to target and serve one or more of these populations, ARC may consider offering preference points in future POWER RFPs or, at minimum, requiring that applicants identify any traditionally underserved populations they plan to serve as well as their plans and capacity to serve these populations.

- **Opportunities for other types of measurement.** There may be opportunities for ARC to collaborate with grantees and other stakeholders to explore measures of social return on investment, as well as longer-term impact, such as sustainability. While the majority of grantees participating in this evaluation felt POWER metrics were appropriate, some encouraged ARC to take the step of identifying methodology and metrics for social return on investment, including measuring the social ROI of serving individuals in recovery, green energy projects, and other types of skills training. ARC may consider creating workgroups to explore the feasibility of this. As part of this work, ARC also may wish to consider ways to include measures of sustainability.

POWER Initiative Evaluation:
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Building Capacity, Opportunities, and Sustainability

September 2022

Introduction

About the POWER Initiative

The Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative "targets 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."[2] Since 2015, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has awarded 395 projects over $319.3 million in POWER funding to help empower communities to create more vibrant, diverse, and sustainable economies. POWER projects have touched 358 coal-impacted counties in 13 states across Appalachia.[3]

POWER's goal of creating a more vibrant economic future for coal-impacted communities is achieved through five distinct but interdependent investment goals:[4]

1. **Economic Opportunities**: Invest in entrepreneurial and business development 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.

In addition, ARC provides grantee support, training, and networking opportunities in pursuit of stronger project proposals, greater capacity for grant management, and increased likelihood that project results will be achieved.

About the Evaluation

Purpose and Objectives

This report is the fourth annual report in a series of studies designed to help ARC and stakeholders to learn from the experiences of those implementing and benefitting from POWER, gauge results, and provide recommendations for the initiative's continuous improvement. A Year 1 (Fiscal Year 2019) Report was issued in October 2019 that focused on project strengths, challenges, and lessons learned. The Year 2/FY20 evaluation built on the FY19 evaluation with a focus on high-priority implementation topics, evaluation of new projects and those not previously evaluated, and assessment of the early results of closed POWER projects. The FY20 evaluation also included analysis of the early impacts of COVID-

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[2] https://www.arc.gov/arcs-power-initiative/
[3] Ibid
[4] These goals are from the 2016-2021 strategic plan, which are used for this report because projects included generally were operating during that period.

19 on POWER grantees, organizations, and communities. In total, grantees and partners representing about 200 projects were engaged in the first two years of evaluation.

In Year 3/FY21 the evaluation team collaborated with ARC staff to pilot an evaluation technique new to ARC and to POWER, *Most Significant Change (MSC).* A form of participatory evaluation and monitoring, MSC enables the articulation of both the values (the relative importance of different types of change) and value (reported change generated) of complex transformational initiatives with multiple types of beneficiaries, a wide variety of predefined indicators of change, and highly participatory interventions.[5] FY21 evaluation activities also included two COVID-19 impact surveys to monitor and update the changes POWER grantees made in response to COVID-19; concerns about POWER-funded projects, organizations, and communities; and feedback about the support grantees needed and/or accessed from ARC. These findings were summarized in companion reports to ARC.

Year 4/FY22 focused on five primary evaluation questions, including:

- To what extent did projects achieve outputs and outcomes? To what extent were outputs and outcomes achieved at project close versus one to three years after?
- What outcomes or impacts have been sustained after project close?
- What are the characteristics of individuals and communities served by POWER?
- To what extent have POWER projects served traditionally underserved communities in Appalachia and/or advanced equity?
- To what extent did POWER projects have unanticipated outcomes not originally targeted for measurement? What factors may have influenced this?

The evaluation team also included several process-related questions specifically about POWER project measures (outputs and outcomes), including:

- How might ARC collect and assess post-close performance metrics in the future?
- Other than outputs and outcomes identified for the project, were there other outputs and outcomes that the grantee feels would have been more appropriate? If so, what are these and how might ARC measure them?
- To what extent was the reporting process effective and user-friendly, and what recommendations might grantees have for ways in which ARC might better standardize and systematize the reporting experience?

To address these questions, the evaluation team used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, including retrieval of data from ARC's database (ARCnet), email follow up with grantees, and interviews and a survey, described in more detail in the Methodology section.

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[5] Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005). The 'Most Significant Change' technique - A guide to its use, Funded by CARE International, United KingdomOxfam Community Aid Abroad, Australia | Learning to Learn, Government of South AustraliaOxfam New Zealand | Christian Aid, United Kingdom | Exchange, United Kingdom Ibis, Denmark | Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke (MS), Denmark Lutheran World Relief, United States of America. Retrieved from http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf

Methodology

Year 4 data collection and analysis included document and data review (outputs and outcomes), virtual interviews with projects closed two or more years as of October 2021, and an online survey of grantees with projects closed as of July 2021 (but more recently than September 2019). Data collection sources and methods included:

1. Document review of project narratives, approval memos, stated outputs and outcomes, and closeout reports submitted to ARC through its online grants management system, ARCnet, for identified projects closed as of July 2021 (n=137 total projects with unique project IDs, including renewals or expansions).

2. Interviews with staff from projects closed as of or before September 2019, using a semi-structured inquiry process with interview protocols developed in collaboration with ARC staff. There were 59 projects eligible for interviews, and staff representing 35 of the projects[6] participated in interviews.

3. Online survey of staff from projects closed between October 2019 and July 2021. There were 78 projects[7] eligible to participate in the survey, and staff representing 35 of the projects[8] participated in the survey.

4. Output and outcome data extracted from ARCnet for all projects closed as of July 2022 (n=176 total projects with unique project IDs, including renewals or expansions). To follow up with projects that had closed as of July 2021 or earlier (n=137 total), the evaluation team created individual files with projected and at-close output and outcome numbers from ARCnet and then sent those files via email to project contacts, requesting (where applicable) updated post-close numbers. A total of 102 projects (includes all unique project IDs)[9] had validated metrics submitted through this process. Another seven had already had post close metrics collected through a different process in summer of 2021.

Data components collected through interviews, and open-ended data from the survey, were analyzed using a general inductive approach, which is particularly useful in drawing clear links between research questions and objectives and data collection results. Data components were reviewed by placing keywords into an analysis matrix until themes emerged, and then recategorizing keywords as necessary. The final step of the analysis was for each member of the evaluation team to review the analysis matrix, collaboratively adding contextual details and revising any theme categorizations as necessary. For project

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[6] A total of 28 unique organizations participated in interviews, including two organizations with multiple projects. The 28 organizations represented 35 unique project IDs and 30 unique projects (3 projects were renewals, e.g., IM-R1, IM-R2, and 2 projects were expansions carried out by the same organizations as the initial project, e.g., IM-B, IM-C1).

[7] Three projects that closed between October 2019 and July 2021 were excluded, because they were listed as cancelled in ARCnet.

[8] The survey had a total of 36 respondents representing 35 unique project IDs and 34 unique projects (one project was a renewal, e.g., IM-R1). Two projects each had responses from two individuals.

[9] Four projects were renewals that did not have separate metrics set, and one project had post-close metrics for the renewal project (which did have its own targets) combined with post-close metrics for its initial project, resulting in a total of 104 projects with post-close metrics for this study.

output and outcome analysis, the evaluation team identified and reviewed at-close and post-close outputs and outcomes to create totals for all closed projects. For projects with post-close data reported, the evaluation team also compared projected outputs and outcomes against actuals, excluding any outputs or outcomes that had actual results reported but no projected results. Appendix B provides more information about quantitative and qualitative data analysis methodology, as well as limitations.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

Outputs, Outcomes, and Perceived Impacts

This section provides outputs and outcomes data for all projects closed as of June 2022, including post-close metrics for 104 projects, and at-close metrics for another 64 projects.[10] In addition, this section reports on project performance (meeting output and outcome targets) for post-close projects only. Further, it offers impact themes and success and challenge factors shared by grantees with closed projects that participated in interviews or an online survey.[11] (See Methodology in Appendix B for more detail on how projects were selected for each.)

The FY21 analysis of stories of change indicated that stakeholders think about POWER's results at three levels:

- Changes for **individuals**—serving and improving participants, students, workers/trainees, and patients
- Changes for **businesses and organizations**—serving and improving businesses and organizations, including through increased sales, as well as leveraging private investment to achieve progress
- Changes brought about for **communities and regions**—serving and improving households and communities; creating and retaining new jobs and businesses; creating plans or studies; and producing tangible results such as new programs, developed acreage, new linear feet of broadband, and new visitors

The remainder of this section focuses on results achieved for each level, as well as grantee perceptions of impact and contributing factors. Appendix A provides a more detailed analysis of post-close measures and performance.

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[10] Post-close validated metrics were collected for 104 projects that closed July 2021 or prior. Four projects with unique project IDs were renewals of previous projects and did not have their own metrics; as such, those are excluded from this count. For one renewal project that had its own metrics, post-close results for both the renewal and the initial project were reported together; as such, projected targets for the renewal project were added to targets for the initial project, and post-close results were reported for the initial project. At-close metrics are included for an additional 64 projects. Three projects that were closed but had been cancelled were excluded from this analysis. Another three projects with unique project IDs but no metrics (two were renewals and one was administrative) also are excluded from the count.

[11] Grantees with projects closed as of July 2021 were invited to participate in virtual interviews (generally, those with projects closed for two or more years as of October 2021) or an online survey. In total, 28 grantees representing 35 projects (30 unique projects, when excluding renewals or extensions – e.g., projects numbered IM-R1, R2, etc.) participated in interviews, and 36 grantees representing 35 POWER projects (34 unique projects, when excluding renewals or extensions) responded to the survey.

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*"It's really hard to turn people into…coders, but when you get a success, wow.
It really has an impact…it has been life changing [for them]."*
Education & Workforce Development Grantee

Closed POWER projects reported serving and improving circumstances for hundreds of thousands of individuals, including participants, patients, students, and workers/trainees. Moreover, grantees participating in interviews and surveys expressed having success in supporting career opportunities for individuals, as well as for business owners and entrepreneurs throughout the region.

Combined Impact (At-Close + Post-Close Outputs and Outcomes)

The **combined at-close and post-close results** reported for 64 closed projects with metrics associated with **individuals** (n=40 with post-close metrics and n=24 with at-close only) indicate that those projects collectively served nearly **208,700 individuals** and improved more than **160,000**. This includes:

- 44,517 participants served / 19,322 improved
- 34,093 patients served / 33,947 improved
- 99,608 students served / 85,154 improved
- 30,455 workers/trainees served / 21,633 improved

Post-Close Project Performance

Collectively, **projects with post-close metrics** (one to three years post-close) related to individuals (n=36)[13] had served nearly 141,000 individuals, **204% of target,** and collectively led to over 121,000 individuals experiencing improvements, **194% of target**. Collectively, targets for each type of individual were met or exceeded, including:

- Participants served (266.5% of target)/ improved (257.8% of target)
- Patients served (195.4% of target) / improved (195.4% of target)
- Students served (198.9% of target) / improved (190.8% of target)
- Workers/trainees served (174.5% of target) / improved (99.8% of target)

Individually, all or most projects met targets for participants served (14 of 14 setting targets for this metric) and improved (12 of 13, 92%), as well as patients served (3 of 3) and improved (3 of 3). For students served, 8 of 11 (73%) met targets, as did 7 of 11 (64%) for students

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[12] Counts of individuals served and improved may be duplicated across projects, as only aggregated numbers were reported (i.e., an individual could have been served and counted by more than one project). Note that counts of improved are always a subset of served, but not all projects that selected and reported outputs for participants and students served also selected and reported outcomes for participants and students improved.

[13] Four projects had post-close results reported but did not set initial targets and thus are excluded.

improved. For workers/trainees served, 11 of 16 (69%) met targets, as did 9 of 16 (56%) for workers/trainees improved. See Table 1.

Table 1: Individual-Level Outputs/Outcomes (Post-Close Projects Only, n=36)

Type	Description (# reporting)	Planned	Post Close	% of Metric Post Close	#/% Grantees Meeting[14] at Close
Output	Participants served (n=14)	8,588	22,885	**266.5%**	**14/100%**
	Patients served (n=3)	17,360	33,928	**195.4%**	**3/100%**
	Students served (n=11)	36,490	72,580	**198.9%**	8/73%
	Workers/trainees served (n=16)	6,577	11,475	**174.5%**	11/69%
Outcome	Participants improved (n=13)	6,016	15,508	**257.8%**	12/92%
	Patients improved (n=3)	17,360	33,928	**195.4%**	**3/100%**
	Students improved (n=11)	35,694	68,121	**190.8%**	7/64%
	Workers/trainees improved (n=16)	3,471	3,463	**99.8%**	9/56%

Cells in **bold** show where projects collectively met or exceeded targets post-close and where 100% of grantees who set targets for that metric met targets post-close.

Impact Themes[15] and Contributing Factors

Grantees that participated in interviews or reported impacts through the online survey (n=58 projects) noted one impact theme and several factors that may have contributed to success in serving and improving individuals.

Impact Theme: *Supporting Business and Career Opportunities*

For 11 projects (19%), grantees reported impacts related to creating career opportunities for Appalachian residents, as well as providing investments, support, and other resources to continue to grow and improve businesses across the region, particularly start-ups, small businesses, and entrepreneurs.

Table 2: Supporting Business and Career Opportunities

Sample Quotes
- [Through] our work in getting connectivity to communities and advocating for the digital economy…there are 4,000 people in the…[region] that have been placed in remote work jobs." *(Education & Workforce Development grantee)*
- "[Community members can use the maker space] as a hobby, side hustle, or small businesses… I have someone who turned a theater hobby into a side hustle, making theater props… [Someone else]…went from a side business to a subscription model and turned it into a small business, and on the larger side, [two clients] adopted a new tool to provide them an updated process…" *(Business Development grantee)*
- "Several businesses have expanded. New jobs have been created. Participating companies have added new customers [and] products." *(Business Development grantee)*

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[14] "Meeting" is defined as meeting at 95% or higher at project close.

[15] In some cases, identified success themes overlap categories (individuals, businesses/organizations, and communities); in these cases, the success theme was placed in the category of best fit.

Success Factors:

Survey respondents (n=36) were asked about a number of factors (identified in the Y1/Y2 evaluations) that may have contributed to project success. Among those factors most likely to be related to individuals, 94% of respondents felt they were completely (61%) or mostly (33%) able to tailor programming to meet the needs of participants; 88% were completely (54%) or mostly (34%) able to adapt their programming when needed; and 89% were completely (49%) or mostly (40%) able to recruit and retain participants.

Figure 1: Project Accomplishments/Success Factors (Individuals)
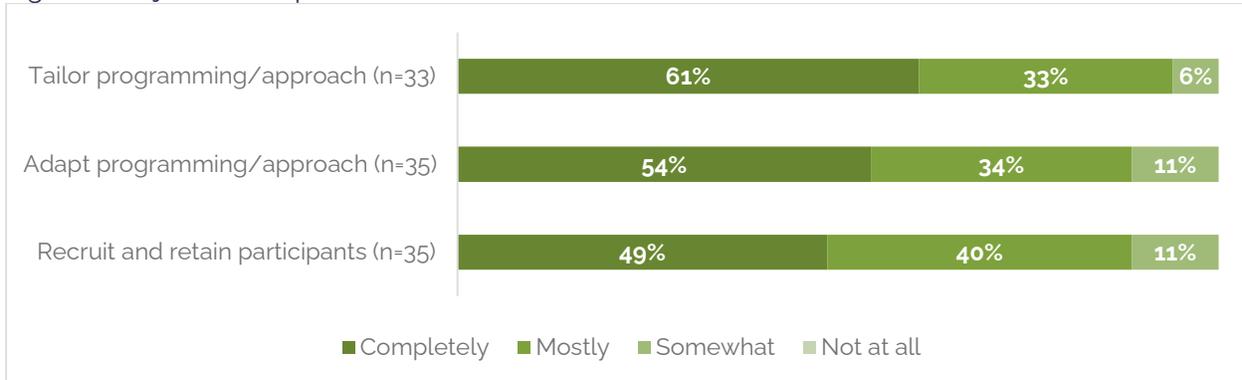
Results for Businesses and Organizations[16]

> *"They say the 'P' in POWER is partnerships…and I don't think 10 years ago, people were thinking about it that way. There's been a shift in perspective, [that] we'll [all] grow bigger if we grow together."*
> Civic Entrepreneurship Grantee

Combined Impact (At-Close + Post-Close Outputs and Outcomes)

The combined **at-close and post-close results** reported for 76 closed projects with metrics associated with **businesses and organizations** (n=37 with post-close metrics and n=39 with at-close only) indicate that at the organization level, grantees collectively have served nearly **13,800 businesses and organizations** and improved over **8,100**, as well as leveraging **over one billion dollars in private investment** and **increasing sales** (export and non-export combined) **by over $54 million**. This includes:

- 13,300 businesses served / 7,967 improved
- 477 organizations served / 191 improved
- $1,057,961,173 leveraged private investment
- $28,033,111 in export sales / $26,371,258 in non-export sales

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[16] Counts of businesses and organizations may be duplicated across projects, as only aggregated numbers were collected (in other words, a business or organization may have been served by more than one project). Note that counts of improved are always a subset of served, but not all projects that selected businesses served as outputs also selected business improved as outcomes.

Post-Close Project Performance

Collectively, **projects with post-close metrics** related to businesses/organizations (n=37) (one to three years post-close) served more than 7,300 businesses and organizations, **177% of target** and improved nearly 5,000 businesses/organizations, **219% of target.** Post-close projects had increased revenue (non-export and export sales) by more than $50M, **132% of target.** Collectively, all targets related to businesses/organizations were met or exceeded except for leveraged private investment, including:

- Businesses served (176.9% of target) / improved (220.9% of target)
- Organizations served (144.9% of target) / improved (143.5% of target)
- Revenues increased – non-export (140.2% of target) / export sales (123.1% of target)

Individually, all projects met targets for organizations served (5 of 5 setting targets for this metric) and improved (5 of 5), as well as for export sales revenue (1 of 1). More than 80% met targets for businesses served (25 of 30, 83%) and improved (25 of 29, 86%). One of two projects met targets for non-export revenues increased, and 64% (14 of 22) met targets for leveraged private investment. See Table 3.

Table 3: Organization-Level Outputs/Outcomes (Post-Close Projects Only, n=37)

Type	Description (# reporting)	Planned	Post Close	% of Metric Post Close	#/% Grantees Meeting[17] Post Close
Output	Businesses served (n=30)	4,088	7,231	**176.9%**	25/83%
	Organizations served (n=5)	49	71	**144.9%**	**5/100%**
Outcome	Businesses improved (n=29)	2,206	4,872	**220.9%**	25/86%
	Leveraged private investment (n=22)	$418,362,321	$313,889,183	75.0%	14/64%
	Organizations improved (n=5)	46	66	**143.5%**	**5/100%**
	Revenues increased (export sales) (n=1)	$20,000,000	$28,033,111	**140.2%**	**1/100%**
	Revenues increased (non-export) (n=4)	$17,931,700	$22,071,258	**123.1%**	2/50%

Cells in **bold** show where projects collectively met or exceeded targets post-close and where 100% of grantees who set targets for that metric met targets post-close.

Impact Themes and Contributing Factors

Grantees that participated in interviews or reported impacts through the online survey (n=58) noted two themes related to improving businesses/organizations, though these themes primarily were related to the grantees' own organizations. Grantees also noted two factors that may have contributed to improvements in businesses served, as well as their own.

Impact Theme: *Building Functional Partnerships*

For 17 projects (29%), grantees reported impacts related to building functional partnerships that helped boost their own organizations' work, as well as creating networks of support to continue serving external businesses, organizations, and communities.

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[17] "Meeting" is defined as meeting at 95% or higher at project close.

Table 4: Building Functional Partnerships

Sample Quotes
- "This was a technical assistance grant, [and] the actual project was not implemented, but partners were motivated to move forward with some aspects of the project independently. Additionally, partners that were convened as part of the study were able to collaborate on initiatives that they would not, had it not been for this [project]." *(Education & Workforce Development grantee)*
- "[It] allowed us to really align with other agencies, and because we had those partnerships in place…when other projects came around, we know who to go to… [This project] really paid off, [especially] in [building partnerships in a neighboring state]." *(Research & Evaluation grantee)*

Impact Theme: *Increasing Grantee Capacity and Momentum*

Grantees from 10 projects (17%) discussed how POWER funding had helped build their capacity as organizations, such as helping them change their organizational structure and focus; enhancing their reputations; and setting them up for grant opportunities and programming that they would not have otherwise been positioned to provide.

Table 5: Increasing Grantee Capacity and Momentum

Sample Quotes
- "I really do feel this [project] has kick-started something that's become an integral piece [of the organization]. In terms of organizational capacity, before…we didn't have the financial or supervision or decision-making framework to support a small business… What we have now, the finances are different, the operations are different, staffing is different… My biggest takeaway is that this literally changed what our organization was." *(Business Development grantee)*
- "…We just finished an application for the Phase 2 process for…Build Back Better… We were joking that [it] was the house that POWER built, because all the groups [had been] POWER funded, and we had all scaled, and we were able to envision moving past the $1.5M range to the $11M range because we got that POWER funding… POWER jumped a bunch of groups to the next level… We've all grown because of POWER." *(Civic Entrepreneurship grantee)*

Success Factors

Among factors related to businesses/organizations (including the grantees' own organizations), 97% of survey respondents felt they were completely (61%) or mostly (36%) able to leverage their organizations' experience, and 97% felt they were completely (53%) or mostly (44%) able to develop partnerships. Other factors (discussed in the Results for Individuals section) that also may have contributed to success include tailoring and adapting programming and recruiting and retaining participants (businesses/organizations).

Figure 2: Project Accomplishments/Success Factors (Businesses/Organizations)

Leverage org. experience/reputation (n=36): 61% | 36% | 3%
Develop and sustain necessary partnerships (n=36): 53% | 44% | 3%

■ Completely ■ Mostly ■ Somewhat ■ Not at all
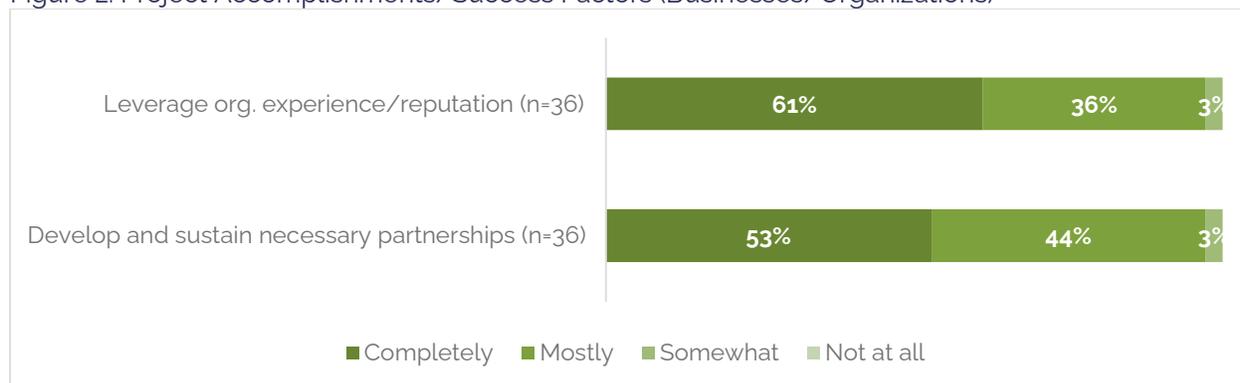
Results for Communities and Regions

> *"The POWER program has been tremendous and has been a great benefit to all the communities…it [improved] the quality of life for our citizens."*
> Community Development Grantee

Combined Impact (At-Close + Post-Close Outputs and Outcomes)
The combined **at-close and post-close results** reported for 149 closed projects with metrics associated with **communities and regions** (n=90 with post-close metrics and n=59 with at-close only) indicate that at the community/region-level, grantees have served over **12,600 households and communities** and improved nearly **12,000.** Projects resulted in nearly **21,000 jobs created or retained** and over **1,500 businesses created**. Projects also generated over **5,500 new visitors**, nearly **500 plans/reports** and **60 new programs**. In terms of infrastructure, collectively projects **renovated or developed** over **580,000 sq. feet** of property and over **625,000 linear feet** of fiber optic cable, pavement, or access road. This includes:

- 700 communities served / 526 improved
- 11,949 households served / 11,473 improved
- 1,504 businesses created
- 7,492 jobs created / 13,499 jobs retained
- 4,825 new visitors – days / 759 new visitors – nights
- 584,887 sq. feet / 296 acres (property renovated, rehabilitated, or developed)
- 625,625 linear feet (primarily fiber optic cable laid, also pavement or access road)
- 100 data – gigabytes (high speed access)[18] / 9 new telecom sites
- 492 plans/reports created / 60 programs created

Post-Close Project Performance
Collectively, **projects with post-close metrics** related to communities (n=88)[19] (one to three years post-close) served more than 1,100 communities and households, **103% of target** and improved nearly 550 communities/households, **109% of target**. Collectively, projects met or exceeded targets for all except one metric (new visitors – overnights) related to communities and regions, including:

- Communities served (109.2% of target) / improved (115.8% of target)
- Households served (100.0% of target) / improved (100.0% of target)
- Businesses created (190.5% of target)
- Jobs created (160.9% of target) / Jobs retained (182.9% of target)
- New visitors – days (113.5% of target)

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[18] Data – megabits per second was also an output selected by two closed grantees, but at close, both reported 0.
[19] Two projects had post-close results reported but did not set initial targets and thus are excluded.

- Sq. feet (158.0% of target) / Acres (118.4% of target)
- Linear feet (106.3% of target)
- Data – gigabytes (100.0% of target) / Telecom sites (100.0% of target)
- Plans/reports (115.1% of target) / Programs implemented (141.2% of target)

Individually, all projects met targets for acreage (1 of 1 setting targets for this metric), data – gigabytes (1 of 1), households served (1 of 1), linear feet (2 of 2), new visitors – days (2 of 2), households improved (1 of 1), programs implemented (6 of 6), and telecom sites (3 of 3). About three-quarters or more met targets for plans/reports (52 of 57, 91%), communities served (31 of 36, 86%), communities improved (32 of 36, 89%), jobs created (21 of 27, 78%), jobs retained (9 of 12, 75%), and businesses created (14 of 19, 74%). One of two met targets for new visitors – overnights, and 3 of 5 (60%) met targets for square feet. See Table 6.

Table 6: Community/Region-Level Outputs/Outcomes (Post-Close Projects Only, n=88)

Type	Description (# reporting)	Planned	Post Close	% of Metric Post Close	#/% Grantees Meeting[20] Post Close
Output	Acreage (n=1)	250	296	**118.4%**	**1/100%**
	Communities served (n=36)	415	453	**109.2%**	31/86%
	Data – Gigabytes (n=1)	100	100	**100.0%**	**1/100%**
	Households served (n=1)	680	680	**100.0%**	**1/100%**
	Linear feet (n=2)	190,550	202,625	**106.3%**	**2/100%**
	New visitors – Days (n=2)	4,250	4,825	**113.5%**	**2/100%**
	New visitors – Overnights (n=2)	10,000	756	7.6%	1/50%
	Plans/reports (n=57)	317	365	**115.1%**	52/91%
	Square feet (n=5)	338,615	534,887	**158.0%**	3/60%
Outcome	Businesses created (n=19)	567	1,080	**190.5%**	14/74%
	Communities improved (n=36)	292	338	**115.8%**	32/89%
	Households improved (n=1)	204	204	**100.0%**	**1/100%**
	Jobs created (n=27)	2,932	4,717.5	**160.9%**	21/78%
	Jobs retained (n=12)	1,881	3,440	**182.9%**	9/75%
	Programs implemented (n=6)	17	24	**141.2%**	**6/100%**
	Telecom sites (n=3)	8	8	**100.0%**	**3/100%**

Cells in **bold** show where projects collectively met or exceeded targets post-close and where 100% of grantees who set targets for that metric met targets post-close.

Communities/Regions Served

Grantees participating in interviews (n=28, representing 30 unique projects) were asked to describe their service areas, including what it meant to "serve" an area, from their perspective, as well as ways they defined and targeted (where applicable) underserved populations. Interview participants nearly unanimously defined "serving" their areas as either providing services to businesses, organizations, or individuals from those areas, or offering services to these entities (whether they were utilized or not). Survey respondents (n=36)

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[20] "Meeting" is defined as meeting at 95% or higher at project close.

were asked whether there were any counties or regions they were unable to serve as outlined in their original scope of work. All but two (94%) said there were no counties or regions they were unable to serve.

Interview participants also were asked the extent to which they targeted underserved populations (which was intentionally undefined, to allow participants to identify how they would define "underserved"). Among the 30 unique projects represented in the interviews, grantees for 22 indicated their projects did not necessarily target specific populations (e.g., by race/ethnicity, gender, experience, etc.), other than noting that counties served were coal-impacted and underserved by virtue of being economically distressed and with residents having low socioeconomic status, poor health outcomes, and lack of access to resources, such as broadband and entrepreneurial services. The eight that did indicate targeting populations identified members of the BIPOC community, justice-involved individuals, individuals in recovery from Substance Use Disorder, and women, in areas where women typically are underrepresented, such as STEM and entrepreneurship.

Impact Themes and Contributing Factors

Grantees that participated in interviews or reported impacts through the online survey (n=58) identified three themes related to improving communities and regions, including project sustainability and expansion; increasing community capacity; and changing mindsets.

Impact Theme: *Sustained Value and Expansion*

Grantees from 35 projects (60% of those participating in interviews) reported impacts related to the staying power or growth of their project, including the ability to move forward from planning to implementation with POWER or other funding (primarily for planning grants); obtain additional or follow-on funding; expand services and/or service areas; and the ability to use data or reports for other initiatives or grants.

Table 7: Sustained Value and Expansion

Sample Quotes
- "We've built on [the initial funding] and are now expanding our…training model…to the point where other organizations are adopting it, which is very exciting." (*Asset-Based Development grantee*)
- "We've gotten two additional POWER grants since this one…One was a new TA grant, and now we have an implementation grant directly connected to that first TA [project] in 2017." (*Business Development grantee*)
- "This report has supported a number of projects in our region, everything from broadband implementation, to buildout, to planning – countywide… This report has supported so many other projects where we can go back and say, it states clearly here this is a need… It's helping to align those goals and initiatives of what we're trying to do." (*Business Development grantee*)

Impact Theme: *Improved Community Capacity*

Grantees representing 13 projects (22%) noted increasing community capacity, such as developing local leadership and initiative, building entrepreneurial and recovery ecosystems, and sometimes spinning off new non-profit organizations.

Table 8: Improved Community Capacity

Sample Quotes
- "We all need something, but we really wanted to empower people across [our region] to take knowledge and build relationships and run with it. That's probably fast forwarding from now, but it's really all about capacity building and inspiring local solutions to local problems." *(Education & Workforce Development grantee)*
- "[A big accomplishment] was the development of [an] impact investment group… This is a working group [ranging] from local bankers to university [staff], to the biggest philanthropic organization we have [in the area]. In my mind, this is how development really happens. So, I'm super excited about the fact that our ecosystem has come together in this way." *(Business Development grantee)*
- [The project led to] formation of a regional non-profit to champion broadband efforts, with early success in securing funds for deploying broadband in partnership with private [Internet Service Providers]." *Research & Evaluation grantee)*

Impact Theme: *Changing Mindsets*

Ten projects (17%) identified ways in which their work was continuing to change mindsets, both within and about regions served – examples include solidifying pathways such as entrepreneurship, STEM, and tourism as viable career opportunities and methods for economic diversification; building belief in the digital economy, remote work, and renewable energy; and helping engage economic development in new ways.

Table 9: Changing Mindsets

Sample Quotes
- "One of the major benefits and results has been continued work around the digital economy… When this grant was first awarded, remote work…in rural communities was like a foreign language, and now it's a real conversation… Economic developers who were looking for small scale manufacturing are now thinking about the digital economy and remote work. For a rural area trying to diversify, that's a game changer." (*Education & Workforce Development grantee*)
- "We've been able to change the conversation and open up the conversation about the possibilities around what people in [rural areas of our state] can do… When there's [a chance] to see what the opportunities are, there's a change in mindset…" (*Education & Workforce Development grantee*)
- "We are fortunate to have been in the prime position for a genuine culture shift in entrepreneurial support in [our region]." (*Business Development grantee*)

Success Factors

Among factors that may be related to community and regional impacts, 95% of survey respondents felt they were completely (56%) or mostly (39%) able to garner necessary buy-in; 94% felt they were completely (50%) or mostly (44%) able to build on external momentum; and 95% felt they were completely (46%) or mostly (49%) able to tell their story effectively. Other factors (discussed in previous sections) that may have contributed include building and sustaining partnerships and leveraging organizational reputation. See Figure 3.

Figure 3: Project Accomplishments/Success Factors (Communities/Regions)

Garner necessary buy-in (n=36): Completely 56%, Mostly 39%, Somewhat 6%
Build on external momentum (n=36): Completely 50%, Mostly 44%, Somewhat 6%
Tell your story effectively (n=36): Completely 46%, Mostly 49%, Somewhat 6%

■ Completely ■ Mostly ■ Somewhat ■ Not at all
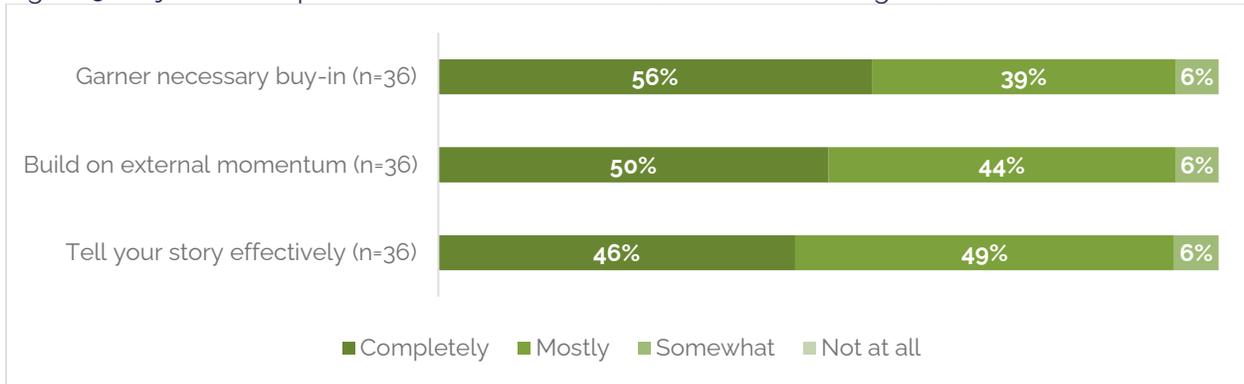
Challenges to Implementation Success and Sustainability

Grantees participating in interviews and the online survey were asked to expand upon challenges they faced during implementation, as well as any challenges they perceived to sustainability of their projects.

Implementation Challenges

The survey asked respondents (n=36) about challenges experienced during implementation (the list of challenges was gleaned from Y1 and Y2 evaluation findings). More than half of respondents indicated no challenges with three of the five items: participant reluctance (56%), partner capacity or commitment (53%), and project staffing (54%). In fact, for four of the five factors (all but resource constraints), 20% or fewer respondents indicated moderate or significant challenges. Resource constraints was the only factor identified as a *significant* challenge by double-digit respondents (and even, then, just 14% of respondents reported that to be a significant challenge). See Figure 4.

Though these challenges were identified during implementation interviews conducted in Y1 and Y2 of the evaluation, many of those interviews were conducted while projects were in the early or mid-stages of their projects. The results of this closed project survey suggest that while grantees may experience challenges during implementation, by close, they may have been able to overcome these challenges, such that they do not continue to perceive them as significant or moderate challenges toward the end of or after the project.

Figure 4: Challenges to Implementation

Resource constraints (n=36): Significant 14%, Moderate 19%, Minor 28%, Not at All 39%
Delays with implementation (n=34): Significant 3%, Moderate 15%, Minor 44%, Not at All 38%
Project staffing/capacity (n=35): Significant 3%, Moderate 17%, Minor 26%, Not at All 54%
Partner capacity/commitment (n=36): Significant 3%, Moderate 14%, Minor 31%, Not at All 53%
Reluctance from potential participants (n=36): Significant 3%, Moderate 3%, Minor 39%, Not at All 56%

■ Significant ■ Moderate ■ Minor ■ Not at All

Perceived Challenges to Sustainability

Interview participants noted two primary concerns related to the sustainability of their projects and/or the impacts that they had seen to date: resource constraints and continued buy-in from partners and community members.

Resource Constraints (Financial and Human)

Grantees representing 13 projects noted the possibility of resource constraints hindering sustainability, including costs associated with maintaining buildings, technology, and equipment, in addition to the ability to continue finding individuals to provide leadership, coaching, and other services within areas with limited capacity.

Table 10: Resource Constraints

Sample Quotes
- "A major challenge to any rural entrepreneurship ecosystem is acquisition and retention to [leadership] talent and professional coaching for entrepreneurs." *(Business Development grantee)*
- "…It's hard, because some of our counties don't even have tourism directors, so it's hard to find that person in that county to actually make that connection and get in the door." *(Asset-Based Development grantee)*
- "It's an expensive program. It's worth it, but it's a lot to raise." *(Asset-Based Development grantee)*

Continued Partner/Community Buy-in

Grantees from 11 projects identified potential challenges in continuing to maintain (and in some cases, re-build if necessary) buy-in to sustain the project, particularly amid community or partner leadership or organizational structure changes.

Table 11: Continued Buy-In

Sample Quotes
- "When [the original partner] was in place, it was easy. As soon as they left, it became impossible. Because the relationships were with them." *(Business Development grantee)*
- "Community buy-in [can be challenging], [because] you're always going to get the folks that aren't real sure about it." *(Asset-Based Development grantee)*
- "Obviously with the nature of our work and working with elected officials, there's always the turnover issue where you have a great champion and they are termed out or lose an election or retire, so you lose momentum." *(Education & Workforce Development grantee)*

METRICS DEFINITIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Measuring Results

Another portion of the Y4 evaluation was to gather grantee feedback on output and outcome metrics, including ease or difficulty of reporting (considering reporting during the project, at close, and post-close), factors affecting reporting, and suggestions for how ARC might improve or change POWER metrics. In addition, the evaluation team reviewed the specific ways grantees defined their metrics within their initial POWER applications, to gain a better understanding of how grantees operationalize ARC's metric definitions.

Metrics Definitions

POWER has multiple outputs and outcomes from which grantees can choose, and each has its own ARC-provided definition. However, the definitions, by design, provide flexibility for grantees to tailor the meaning of outputs and outcomes to best fit their projects. Grantees must select outputs and outcomes as part of the application process, and in the application, they both specify definitions for each selected metric and set targets.

The output and outcome definitions examined in this section refer only to those projects included in the post-close study (n=137 unique project IDs, and 132 with metrics targets set and at close and/or post-close data reported).

Outputs

For outputs, grantees generally defined metrics relatively similarly, and definitions generally aligned to the POWER definitions (POWER metric definitions are provided in Appendix E). The most commonly selected output was plans/reports (n=75), which is likely because nearly half of the projects included in this portion of the study were planning (TA) projects. Plans or reports tended to be strategic or economic development plans, feasibility plans for construction projects or broadband, and POWER implementation applications. The next most common metric was communities served (n=47 projects), which generally was cities, counties, or regions that were covered by plans (for planning projects), services, or new access to infrastructure. Just under 40% of projects (38%, n=18) selecting this metric were planning projects. Participants served was the third most commonly selected metric (n=23); this was generally a catch-all (aligned with the POWER definition) for individuals receiving services who did not fit other categories, such as patient, student, or worker. See Table 12.

Outcomes

Definitions of outcomes tended to vary more than definitions of outputs, particularly for leveraged private investment, programs implemented, and outcomes related to improvement, especially for businesses, communities, and organizations. However, definitions for businesses and jobs created/retained, telecom sites, revenues increased (export and non-export), and households, patients, participants, students, and workers/trainees improved were relatively similar for most projects selecting those outcomes. See Table 13.

Table 12: Grantee Definitions of Outputs

Output[21]	Grantee Definitions
Acreage (n=2)	Property redeveloped and land prepared for development
Businesses served (n=41)	For most (n=38), businesses accessing services, such as coaching, funding, technical assistance, or training, or having access to broadband or facilities. Two defined this as businesses hiring trainees from the project, and one defined it as businesses with new partnerships
Communities served (n=47)	Communities, which included cities or towns, counties, and regions, covered by services, plans, or infrastructure projects. This could include counties or regions in which businesses or individuals who had access to services resided or were working
Data – Gigabytes (n=1)	High speed access
Data – Megabits per second (n=1)	Data offered through speeds up to 10 Gbps
Households served (n=2)	Households with access to broadband
Linear feet (n=4)	Feet of new fiber-optic cable (n=2) and pavement/access road (n=2)
New visitors – Days (n=3)	Visitors to tourism sites
New visitors – Overnights (n=3)	Visitors to tourism sites
Organizations served (n=6)	Entities (often higher education institutions) participating in services (n=4) as well as those hosting or developing new programs (n=1) or achieving occupancy rates (n=1)
Participants served (n=23)	Generally, individuals receiving services (e.g., training, mentorship, access to maker spaces, etc.) who are not students, patients, or workers (e.g., farmers, apprentices, pre-start up entrepreneurs, etc.)
Patients served (n=3)	Patients receiving services from healthcare and SUD recovery projects
Plans/reports (n=75)	Most commonly, strategic plans, feasibility and broadband studies, and POWER implementation applications as part of planning (TA) projects (72% of projects with this output were planning projects). Also includes business plans, health improvement plans, and research studies
Square feet (n=7)	Property renovated or constructed
Students served (n=16)	For most (n=15), students participating in programming (e.g., training or education); for one, individuals under 18 with new access to broadband
Workers/trainees served (n=18)	Workers (often identified as those unemployed or underemployed) enrolled in training or education programming

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[21] This section reports on definitions for all projects identified for the initial set of interviews or surveys, regardless of whether post-close data was submitted. As such, project counts in this table may not equal project counts in other tables in this report.

Table 13: Grantee Definitions of Outcomes

Outcome[22]	Grantee Definitions
Businesses created (n=26)	New businesses created as a direct result of projects, including new start-ups, social enterprises, farms, and others
Businesses improved (n=40)	Businesses reporting improvements through services, including increased sales or revenue, expansion, cost savings, diversification, knowledge/skills, etc. (n=19); hiring program trainees (or having their own employees trained) (n=7); receiving capital or financing (n=6); completing programming (n=4); subscribing to broadband (n=2); having access to facilities or services (n=2)
Communities improved (n=47)	Communities included in a plan (n=18); reporting improvements (increased tourism, access to capital, jobs, etc.) (n=12); participating in a community or asset-based development project (n=9); having high engagement or improved strategies for diversification, entrepreneurship, etc. (n=4); having businesses or entrepreneurs served (n=3); subscribing to broadband (n=1)
Households improved (n=2)	Households subscribing to new broadband
Jobs created (n=38)	Jobs created through existing business expansion, new facilities or programs, or new start-ups or social enterprises
Jobs retained (n=20)	Positions that businesses were able to retain through training, coaching, process improvements, etc. provided to the businesses
Leveraged private investment (n=29)	New investment or capital from angel and impact investors for new businesses; financing; or philanthropic investment (n=20); businesses or organizations reinvesting in their own companies or programming through increased revenues or capacity (n=9); revenue generated (n=2)[23]
Organizations improved (n=6)	Participating in a planning project (n=2); developing new programming or partnerships (n=2); participating in training (n=1); achieving occupancy (n=1)
Participants improved (n=19)	Participants reporting improvements (gains in knowledge/skills, income, cost savings, etc.) (n=13); those completing training or programming (n=4); those participating in a project or training (n=2)
Patients improved (n=3)	Patients receiving services from healthcare and SUD recovery projects
Programs implemented (n=10)	Newly created programs (to improve health, tourism, economic and business practices etc.) (n=4); academic or non-credit training programs (n=3); and a website portal; a structural study; and a new visitors center
Revenues increased – Export sales (n=1)	Export funds generated by program participants
Revenues increased – Nonexport sales (n=6)	Increased revenue through sales or expansions in tourism
Students improved (n=15)	Students obtaining a credential, degree, certification, job, and/or reporting improvements (n=11); participating in programming (n=2); completing programming (n=1); subscribing to broadband (n=1)
Telecom sites (n=4)	Wi-Fi access points (n=3) or buildings with new fiber (n=1)
Workers/trainees improved (n=18)	Workers/trainees obtaining a credential, degree, certification, job, and/or reporting improvements (n=12); completing programming (n=6)

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[22] This section reports on definitions for all projects identified for the initial set of interviews or surveys, regardless of whether post-close data was submitted. As such, project counts in this table may not equal project counts in other tables in this report.
[23] Two projects are included in each of the first two groups; their definitions included elements of both groups.

Based on ARC outcome definitions, except for patients improved (which is generally assumed to be the same as patients served – see definition in Appendix E), "improved" is intended to demonstrate a measurable benefit or improvement for entities served. As such, generally the definition of "improved" may be expected to differ from the definition of "served" (e.g., served might be participating in a training or program but not necessarily completing, participating but not necessarily demonstrating benefits, having access to broadband but not necessarily subscribing, etc.). Indeed, this is the case for most "improved" outcome definitions, particularly businesses, households, participants, students, and workers/trainees, where most or all projects defined improved as not just participating or having access, but also completing, earning a credential, getting a job, subscribing to broadband, increasing revenue, or otherwise demonstrating a measurable, positive change.

However, the majority of projects with metrics for communities improved (64%, 30 of 47) and half of those with organizations improved (50%, 3 of 6) appeared to define "served" and "improved" in the same way. For organizations improved, this was defined as participating in a technical assistance/planning project (for two) or participating in a training (for one). For communities improved, this was defined as being included in a plan as part of a planning project (n=18); participating in or being selected for a community or asset-based development project (but not appearing to have any other measures of improvement, other than participation or being served by the project) (n=9); or communities with businesses being served by business development projects (n=3).

Measurement Challenges

Survey respondents (n=36) felt that the POWER reporting process, as compared to similar grants, was not difficult, with 81% describing it as very easy (6%) or easy (75%) (see Figure 5). Just six respondents described it as difficult, and none felt it was very difficult. Survey respondents also were asked about their level of confidence in being able to fully report on outputs and outcomes up to three years after project close (note that survey respondents' projects generally had been closed for less than three years at the time of the survey). A large portion of respondents (87%, 29 of 36) felt completely (45%) or mostly (42%) confident that they would be able to report fully on results, with just 9% (n=3) feeling only somewhat confident and only one feeling not at all confident (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: Difficulty of Reporting
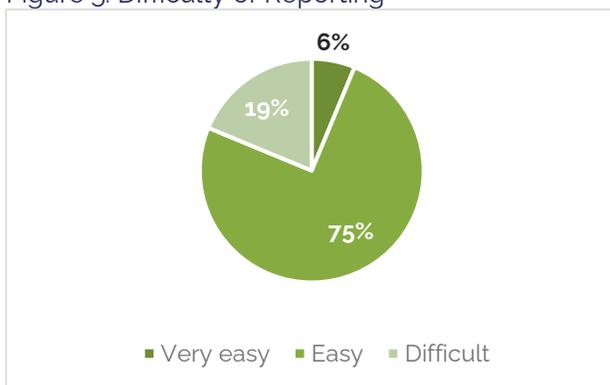
Figure 6: Confidence in Ability to Follow Up

Figure 5: 6%, 19%, 75%. Legend: Very easy, Easy, Difficult

Figure 6: 3%, 9%, 42%, 45%. Legend: Completely, Mostly, Somewhat, Not at all
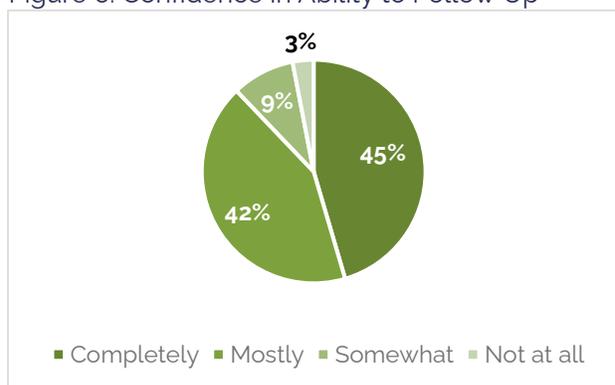
For those survey respondents who said that follow-up reporting up to three years post-close would be applicable to their projects (n=19), the most common potential challenge identified was reliance on partners (42%), followed by the ability to contact and follow up with participants (32%) and internal staff capacity (32%).

Figure 7: Potential Challenges to Follow-Up Reporting

Reliance on partners	42%
Following up with participants	32%
Staff capacity	32%
Lack of robust internal data system	21%
Lack of clarity on requirements for updating	16%
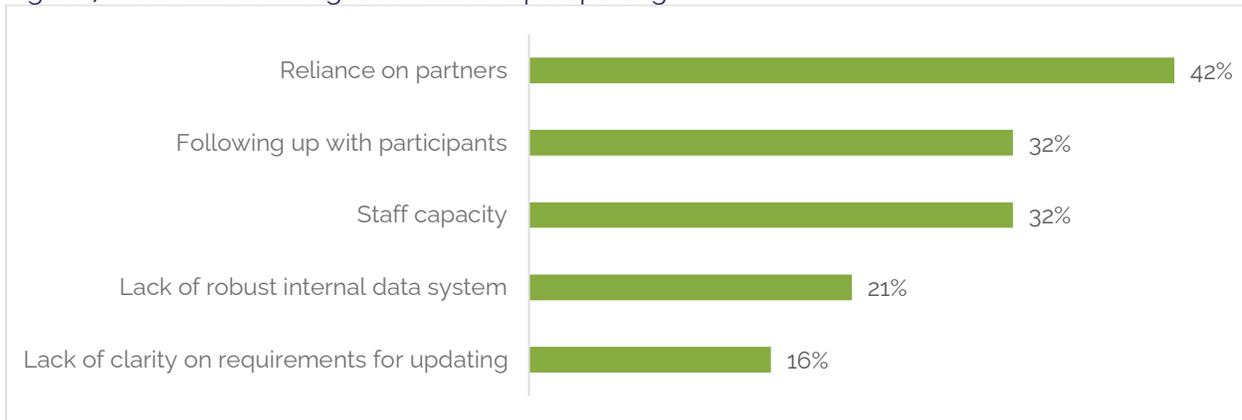
Among those participating in interviews, of the 30 unique projects represented, grantees from 22 projects indicated they anticipated no challenges in reporting or follow-up. Grantees from two of the projects noted challenges with participant follow-up, particularly months or years after project end: one identified challenges with reliance on partners, and another identified some lack of clarity on how to count outputs and outcomes post-close once they had received another grant to expand upon services offered in the first.

Six interview participants discussed challenges in being able to specifically quantify their impact, particularly when the impacts were intangible or less clearly tied to activities, but still observed, particularly for planning (TA) projects. For example, one participant noted, "TA projects that are education or peer learning…it's hard to measure some of the intangibles of peer learning." Another said, "I feel like, what [does it mean] to improve a community with a TA project…?" Others discussed challenges in quantifying impacts, particularly with tourism. "We know people are coming into our communities, but we can't truly put a number to it…" Another agreed. "Tourism is a hard one to track. There are formulas that will tell you how much travelers spend and that type of thing, but it's incredibly hard to put a specific number on it. Was it our advertising that brought the traveler here, or was it something else?"

Additional Measurement Recommendations

Interview participants were asked the extent to which they felt the outputs and outcomes selected for their projects were appropriate. While the vast majority (all but five) felt they were appropriate and had no suggestions for changes, five grantees felt that there may be opportunities for ARC to add to the current list of metrics (though not take any away). Two grantees suggested that ARC consider measures of long-term program sustainability (e.g., not just the number of businesses created, but also the number that stayed open for a certain number of years; not just the number of jobs created, but the number that were still in place after a certain number of years, etc.). Three others expressed a desire to partner

with ARC to identify ways of measuring social return on investment. One grantee noted, "My dream is we'd have a more universally-agreed on environmental and social bottom line framework that could be applied…and we could say, [for example], we didn't create a job here, but we reduced greenhouse gas impact, or we helped align business practice with the community…" Another expressed similar desire. "Social return on investment would be beneficial not just to us, but for others, especially those talking about recovery, green energy, skills training. It didn't make us money that we taught people these skills, but it did have an impact." A third grantee suggested exploring the European model of social return on investment measurement.

Conclusions

POWER projects have served and improved hundreds of thousands of individuals and tens of thousands of businesses, organizations, households, and communities, as well as contributing to job creation and infrastructure.

The combined at-close and post-close outputs and outcomes for closed projects included in this evaluation (n=169) indicate that POWER programming has collectively:

- Served nearly **208,700 individuals** (participants, patients, students, or workers) and improved more than **160,000 individuals** (typically defined as obtaining degrees, credentials, jobs, improved knowledge/skills, improved health outcomes, and/or completing programming).
- Served nearly **13,800 businesses and organizations** and improved over **8,100 businesses** and organizations (typically defined as improving revenue/sales, efficiency, cost savings, and/or knowledge and skills)
- Leveraged over **$1B in private investment** and **increased sales** for project participants (businesses and organizations) by over **$54M**
- Served over **12,600 households and communities** and improved nearly **12,000 households and communities** (through broadband subscriptions; increased capacity, revenues, tourism, etc., and/or access to programming, plans, or research and data)
- Contributed to nearly **21,000 jobs created or retained** and over **1,500 businesses created**
- Generated over **5,500 new visitors**, nearly **500 plans/reports** (including broadband studies, feasibility studies, strategic plans, and research reports) and **60 new programs**
- Renovated or developed over **580,000 sq. ft. of property** and over **625,000 linear feet** of fiber optic cable, pavement, or access road

The majority of POWER projects with post-close data were successful at meeting or exceeding output and outcome targets.

Of the 68 projects with targets set for both outputs and outcomes, 60% (n=41) met or exceeded targets for each of their selected outputs and outcomes; 12% (n=8) met targets for each selected output (but not each outcome); and 6% (n=4) met targets for each selected outcome (but not each output). While 22% (n=15) did not meet targets for all selected outputs or outcomes, just four projects did not meet targets for *any* selected output or outcome. For projects with output targets only (n=35), all but two (94%) met or exceeded targets for all selected outputs. Among specific outputs, post-close grantees appeared less likely to meet or exceed set targets for square feet (60%, 3/5 meeting targets), workers/trainees served (69%, 11/16), and students served (73%, 8/11 meeting targets). For outcomes, post-close grantees appeared less likely to meet or exceed targets for workers/trainees improved (56%, 9/16); students improved (64%, 7/11), and leveraged private investment (64%, 14/22). Some grantees that participated in interviews did acknowledge that they struggled with identifying targets that would appear ambitious to reviewers (during the application review phase), but also were feasible and realistic for them as organizations. Where appropriate, it may be beneficial for ARC to provide additional guidance for grantees in setting targets that are ambitious yet feasible, based on the capacity, experience, and resources available to the grantee and partners.

Grantees noted a number of long-term impacts for closed projects, including sustainability, capacity building (for their own organizations and their regions or communities), and the ability to change mindsets.

Grantees participating in this evaluation described long-term impacts post-close, including project sustainability and in some cases, expansion (to new programming or regions); the ability to create new or enhanced regional ecosystems, including building and maintaining impactful partnerships and increasing community capacity; continued support for growth and new career opportunities for regional businesses and individuals; building organizational capacity and momentum for grantee organizations, such as enhancing reputations, changing focus, or being set up for much larger funding opportunities; and changing mindsets in the region, including building interest and awareness of never-before considered career pathways, belief in the digital economy and remote work, and identifying new ways of engaging economic development.

Nearly all evaluation participants reported feeling that they were able to serve their targeted communities or regions as defined in their initial proposals, but few indicated targeting specific underserved populations.

Most grantees that participated in interviews and surveys noted that they were successful in providing services for the counties, communities, and/or states that they planned to serve. Service areas generally were selected based on being distressed areas and being in need of services, such as training programs, entrepreneurial coaching and business services, access to capital, and economic diversification opportunities. Very few grantees indicated that they specifically targeted any traditionally underserved populations (e.g., by race/ethnicity, disability, veteran status, gender, etc.), instead noting that they felt the entire area was underserved by virtue of experiencing economic distress. Those that did target specific populations mentioned members of the BIPOC community, formerly incarcerated individuals or those in recovery from substance use disorder, and women, in areas and sectors in which women had been traditionally underrepresented (e.g., STEM). If ARC desires more POWER projects to target and serve specific underserved populations, ARC may consider requesting that applicants identify any traditionally underserved populations that they plan to serve, as well as specific plans and capacity to serve these populations.

Project definitions of "improved" metrics for outcomes, particularly for communities and organizations, do not always appear to demonstrate measurable changes.

ARC defines outcome metrics for "improved" (businesses, communities, participants, students, and workers/trainees, in particular) as showing measurable improvements, necessarily and appropriately leaving flexibility for grantees to define what measurable improvements mean for the diverse projects proposed. However, in some cases, especially for communities and organizations, projects examined in this evaluation appeared to define "improved" in the same way as "served" – i.e., participating in the project or having access to services, or being covered by plans or reports for planning projects, without necessarily demonstrating improvements as a result. ARC may wish to consider whether it should provide more clarity on the meaning of "improved", especially for communities, where it

may be more difficult (but still important) to measure improvements, beyond just project participation or access to services. ARC may also wish to consider whether it is appropriate for planning projects (which, as grantees have shared in multiple years of this evaluation, are of incredible value in planning, studying, and preparing) to include outcomes, because planning projects (again, while identified as valuable) are not guaranteed to lead to later funding or implementation.

Some grantees included in this evaluation were unclear about requirements on follow-up reporting, as well as how to report follow-up numbers for projects with additional funding (either through POWER or other sources).

While the majority of grantees that participated in interviews or surveys for this evaluation indicated that POWER's reporting processes were fairly easy, and that they felt confident they could report data up to three years post-close, some indicated that they had been unclear that they were expected to be able to follow up after the grant closed. Others reporting that they did understand that they were supposed to follow up identified some challenges with tracking participants multiple years after the project. Finally, some that had received follow-on grants (whether from POWER or other sources, such as USDA) were somewhat unclear on how to count beneficiaries as part of follow-up from the original project but avoid double-counting in the follow-on or new project. As such, ARC may wish to consider ways in which it could provide additional guidance, clarity, and effective practices for post-close follow up (including ensuring grantees understand the obligation, as well as have processes in place for doing so), and providing clarity, definitions, and guidelines around how to accurately count beneficiaries in the long-term for projects with follow-on funding.

There may be opportunities for ARC to collaborate with grantees and other stakeholders to explore measures of social return on investment, as well as longer-term impact, such as sustainability.

While the majority of grantees participating in this evaluation indicated that they felt POWER metrics were appropriate, there were some who wanted to encourage ARC to be progressive in potentially identifying methodology and metrics for social return on investment, including measuring the social ROI of activities such as serving individuals in recovery, green energy projects, and other types of skills training. ARC may consider creating workgroups to explore the feasibility of this. As part of this work, ARC also may wish to consider ways to include measures of sustainability.

Appendix

A. Post-Closure Project Performance

B. Methodology and Limitations

C. Interview and Survey Questions

D. Projects Included in the Y4 Evaluation

E. ARC Definitions of POWER Outputs and Outcomes

Appendix A
Post-Close Project Performance

A primary focus of the Year 4 evaluation was to gather post-close data and qualitative insights from grantees representing projects that had been closed for one year or more as of the time of evaluation. There were 137 projects[24] identified that met the initial criteria for inclusion (closure as of July 2021 or earlier). Of the 137 identified, 5 projects were renewals (four did not have their own metrics, and one had results reported with the initial and renewal project combined), and 28 projects were unable to be validated (generally due to original grant contacts having left or lack of response). Thus, there were 104 projects for which validated information was collected. The majority (60%) of projects were focused on either Business Development or Education and Workforce Development. Projects fell into the following categories:

- **Business Development**: 30% (n=31)
- **Education and Workforce Development**: 30% (n=31)
- **Asset-Based Development**: 15% (n=16)
- **Community Development**: 14% (n=15)
- **Research & Evaluation**: 6% (n=6)
- **Health**: 3% (n=3)
- **Civic Entrepreneurship**: 2% (n=2)

The remainder of this section focuses on the extent to which projects with data reported post-close met or exceeded originally proposed targets, as well as the extent to which grantees were more or less likely to meet certain targets. As such, data reported for each metric in this section includes only projects for which both target and validated data were reported for that metric (n=103).[25]

Results for Individuals

There were 36 projects in the post-close group that had both planned and post-close data for metrics related to **individuals.** Collectively, these projects planned to serve over 69,000 individuals. At one year to three years post-close, the projects had served nearly **141,000 individuals**, 204% of the target. Collectively, targets for each type of individual served— participants, patients, students, and workers/trainees—were exceeded.

In terms of individual projects, all grantees met or exceeded targets for participants served (14 of 14) and patients served (3 of 3), while nearly three-quarters (8 of 11) met or exceeded targets for students served, and just under 70% (11/16) met or exceeded targets for workers/trainees served.

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[24] Excluding 6 projects that were not included due to their project type (primarily those that were state administrative grants) and 3 additional that were excluded because they were cancelled.
[25] Some projects, for some outputs and outcomes, included validated results data but had no targets reported; results data are excluded from this section. Additionally, one project had no outputs and outcomes for which target data was reported; that project is excluded from this section, resulting in a total of 103 projects with validated data for this section.

Collectively, projects planned to improve more than 62,500 individuals. Post close, the projects led to over **121,000 individuals** experiencing improvements, 194% of the target. Collectively, targets for each type of individual improved were met or exceeded.

In terms of individual projects, all grantees met or exceeded targets for patients improved (3 of 3), and all but one met or exceeded targets for participants improved (12 of 13). For students improved, 64% (7 of 11) met or exceeded targets, and just over half (56%, 9 of 16) met or exceeded targets for workers/trainees improved.

Table 14: Individual-Level Outputs/Outcomes

Type	Description (# reporting)	Planned	Post Close	% of Metric Post Close	#/% Grantees Meeting[26] at Close
Output	Participants served (n=14)	8,588	22,885	266.5%	14/100%
	Patients served (n=3)	17,360	33,928	195.4%	3/100%
	Students served (n=11)	36,490	72,580	198.9%	8/73%
	Workers/trainees served (n=16)	6,577	11,475	174.5%	11/69%
Outcome	Participants improved (n=13)	6,016	15,508	257.8%	12/92%
	Patients improved (n=3)	17,360	33,928	195.4%	3/100%
	Students improved (n=11)	35,694	68,121	190.8%	7/64%
	Workers/trainees improved (n=16)	3,471	3,463	99.8%	9/56%

Results for Businesses and Organizations

There were 37 projects in the post-close group that had both planned and post close data for metrics related to **businesses and organizations.** Collectively, these projects planned to serve more than 4,100 businesses and organizations. At one year to three years post-close, the projects had served more than **7,300 businesses and organizations**, 177% of the target. Collectively, targets for both businesses and organizations were exceeded.

In terms of individual projects, all grantees met or exceeded targets for organizations served (5 of 5), and 83% (25 of 30) met targets for businesses served.

Collectively, projects planned to improve more than 2,250 businesses and organizations. Post close, the projects had improved nearly **5,000 businesses and organizations**, 219% of the target. Collectively, projects planned to leverage more than $418M in private investment. Post close, the projects had leveraged nearly **$314M**, 75% of the target. Collectively, projects planned to increase non-export and export revenue by nearly $38M. Post close, the projects had increased revenue by more than **$50M**, 132% of the target. Collectively, targets for businesses and organizations improved and revenues increased (both export and non-export) were exceeded, while the actual for leveraged private investment was 75% of the collective target.

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[26] "Meeting" is defined as meeting at 95% or higher at project close.

In terms of individual projects, all grantees met or exceeded targets for organizations improved (5 of 5) and export sale revenues increased (1 of 1). All but four (86%, 25 of 29) met or exceeded targets for businesses improved, and 64% (14 of 22) met or exceeded targets for leveraged private investment. Half of projects (2 of 4) met or exceeded targets for non-export revenues increased.

Table 15: Organization-Level Outputs/Outcomes

Type	Description (# reporting)	Planned	Post Close	% of Metric Post Close	#/% Grantees Meeting[27] Post Close
Output	Businesses served (n=30)	4,088	7,231	176.9%	25/83%
	Organizations served (n=5)	49	71	144.9%	5/100%
Outcome	Businesses improved (n=29)	2,206	4,872	220.9%	25/86%
	Leveraged private investment (n=22)	$418,362,321	$313,889,183	75.0%	14/64%
	Organizations improved (n=5)	46	66	143.5%	5/100%
	Revenues increased (export sales) (n=1)	$20,000,000	$28,033,111	140.2%	1/100%
	Revenues increased (non-export) (n=4)	$17.931,700	$22,071,258	123.1%	2/50%

Results for Communities and Regions

There were 88 projects in the post-close group that had both planned and post-close data for metrics related to **communities and regions.** For outputs, collectively, these projects planned to serve just under 1,100 communities and households. Post close, the projects had served more than **1,100 communities and households**, 103% of the target. Collectively, the projects targeted the creating of just over 310 plans, while post close, more than **350 plans** had been created, 115% of the target. Further, collectively, projects targeted nearly 339K square feet of property renovated or created, and over 190K linear feet of fiber optic cable. Post close, nearly **535K square feet** of property was renovated or created (158% of the target), and more than **202K linear feet** of fiber optic cable was laid (106% of the target). Collectively, targets for all output metrics were met or exceeded, with the exception of new visitors – overnights (which was the result of one of two projects not meeting targets).

In terms of individual projects, all grantees met or exceeded targets for acreage (1 of 1); data – gigabytes (1 of 1); households served (1 of 1); linear feet (2 of 2); and new visitors – days (2 of 2). All but five met or exceeded targets in communities served (86%, 31 of 36) and plans/reports (91%, 52 of 57), and 3 of 5 (60%) met targets in square feet. One of two met targets in new visitors – overnights.

Collectively, projects planned to improve nearly 500 communities and households. Post close, the projects had improved nearly **550 communities and households**, 109% of the target. Collectively, projects planned to create or retain over 4,800 jobs. Post close, projects had **created or retained** nearly **8,200 jobs**, 169% of the target. Projects also planned to create over 500 businesses, and post close, they had created nearly **1,100 businesses**, 190%

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[27] "Meeting" is defined as meeting at 95% or higher at project close.

of the target. Finally, collectively projects planned to create 17 programs, and post close, projects had created **24 new programs**, 141% of the target. Collectively, targets for all outcome measures were met or exceeded.

In terms of individual projects, all grantees met or exceeded targets for households improved (1 of 1), programs implemented (6 of 6) and telecom sites (3 of 3). Nearly 90% met or exceeded targets for communities improved (32 of 36), and three-quarters (9 of 12) met or exceeded targets for jobs retained. All but six (21 of 27, 78%) met or exceeded targets for jobs created, and all but five (14 of 19, 74%) met or exceeded targets for businesses created.

Table 16: Community/Region-Level Outputs/Outcomes

Type	Description (# reporting)	Planned	Post Close	% of Metric Post Close	#/% Grantees Meeting[28] Post Close
Output	Acreage (n=1)	250	296	118.4%	1/100%
	Communities served (n=36)	415	453	109.2%	31/86%
	Data – Gigabytes (n=1)	100	100	100.0%	1/100%
	Households served (n=1)	680	680	100.0%	1/100%
	Linear feet (n=2)	190,550	202,625	106.3%	2/100%
	New visitors – Days (n=2)	4,250	4,825	113.5%	2/100%
	New visitors – Overnights (n=2)	10,000	756	7.6%	1/50%
	Plans/reports (n=57)	317	365	115.1%	52/91%
	Square feet (n=5)	338,615	534,887	158.0%	3/60%
Outcome	Businesses created (n=19)	567	1,080	190.5%	14/74%
	Communities improved (n=36)	292	338	115.8%	32/89%
	Households improved (n=1)	204	204	100.0%	1/100%
	Jobs created (n=27)	2,932	4,717.5	160.9%	21/78%
	Jobs retained (n=12)	1,881	3,440	182.9%	9/75%
	Programs implemented (n=6)	17	24	141.2%	6/100%
	Telecom sites (n=3)	8	8	100.0%	3/100%

Results Overall

The next sections focus on overall results (outputs and outcomes) for projects with post-close measures that had both targets and results reported (n=103). The first section looks at total counts of outputs and outcomes set by project, as well as the percentage of outputs and outcomes that each project met (in other words, if a project selected four outputs, for how many of those outputs did it meet or exceed targets). The second section looks at individual outputs and outcomes, and the percent of the target for that output or outcome that was met (in other words, if a project set a target of 100 businesses served, how many businesses did it actually serve, i.e., what percent of the target).

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[28] "Meeting" is defined as meeting at 95% or higher at project close.

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Counts of Outputs/Outcomes by Project and Percentage of Projects Meeting Targets

Of the 103 total projects with validated, post-close data and with both targets and results reported, 68 set targets for both outputs and outcomes; the other 35 had outputs only (generally, these were planning projects).

Of the 68 with both outputs and outcomes, 41 (60%) met or exceeded targets for each of their selected outputs and outcomes. Another eight (12%) met targets for each of their selected outputs (but not outcomes), and four (6%) met targets for each of their selected outcomes (but not outputs). While 22% (n=15) did not meet targets for *all* selected outputs or outcomes, just four projects did not meet targets for *any* of their selected outputs and outcomes. See Figure 8.

Of the 35 projects with outputs only, 33 (94%) met or exceeded targets for all selected outputs. See Figure 9.

Figure 8: Projects with Both Outputs/Outcomes

■ Both ■ Outputs only ■ Outcomes only ■ Neither
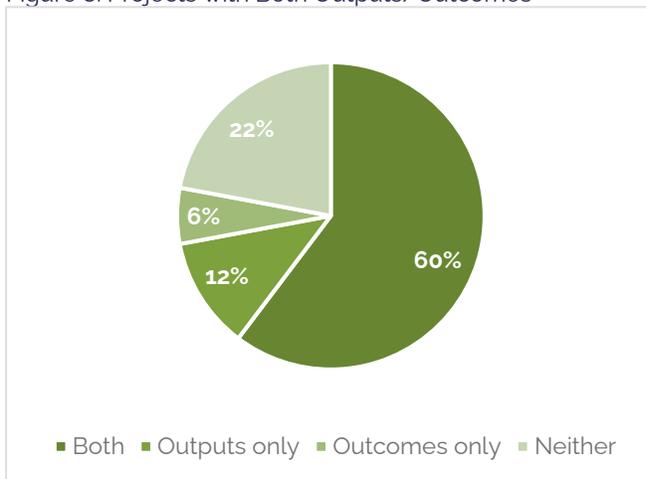
Figure 9: Projects with Outputs Only

■ Met all targets ■ Did not meet targets
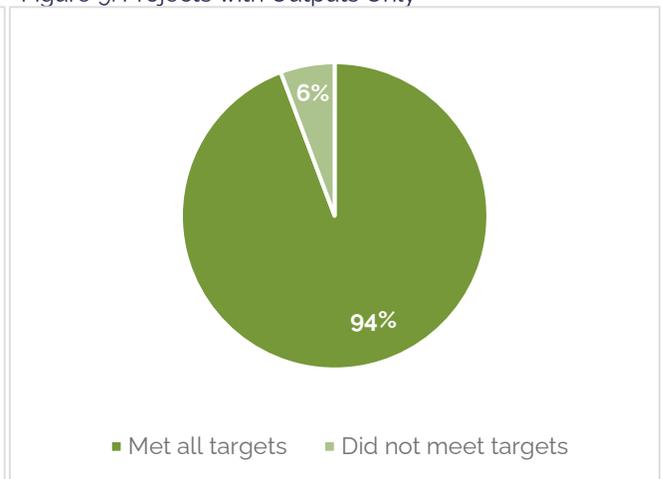
Among the 103 projects with targets/results for **outputs**, overall, 80% (n=82) met or exceeded targets for each (i.e., if a project selected four output types, it met or exceeded set targets for all four). By project type, all Community Development (n=15), Research and Evaluation (n=6), and Health (n=3) projects met targets for all selected outputs. (However, note that two-thirds of these projects (n=16) selected only one output type, and five others selected only two). For Asset-Based Development projects (n=15), 80% met all targets for all selected outputs. Of the 31 Education and Workforce Development projects, just under three-fourths (74%) met targets for all selected outputs, as did 71% of Business Development projects (n=31 total). Another 3% of Business Development projects met targets for 75-99% of all outputs selected (e.g., if they selected four outputs, they met targets for at least three). See Figure 10.

Figure 10: Percent of Projects Meeting Targets for Each Selected Output by Project Type
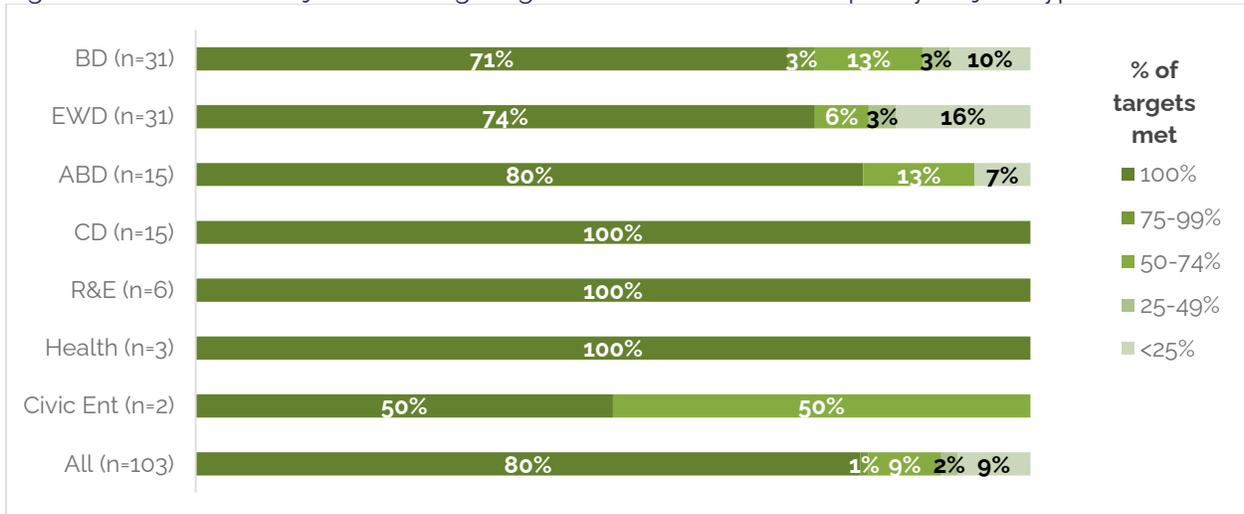
Among the 68 projects with targets/results for **outcomes**, overall, 66% (n=45) met or exceeded targets for each (in other words, if a project selected four outcome types, it met or exceeded set targets for all four). By project type, all Community Development (n=13), Health (n=2), and Civic Entrepreneurship (n=2) projects met targets for all selected outcomes. (However, 10 of these projects selected only one outcome type, and three others selected only two). For Asset-Based Development projects (n=14), 57% met all targets for all selected outcomes, and 14% met targets for 75-99% of their selected outcomes (e.g., if they selected four outcomes, they met targets for at least three). Of the 20 Education and Workforce Development projects, over half (55%) met targets for all selected outcomes, as did 53% of Business Development projects (n=17 total). Another 18% of Business Development projects met targets for 75-99% of all outcomes selected.

Figure 11: Percent of Projects Meeting Targets for Each Selected Outcome by Project Type
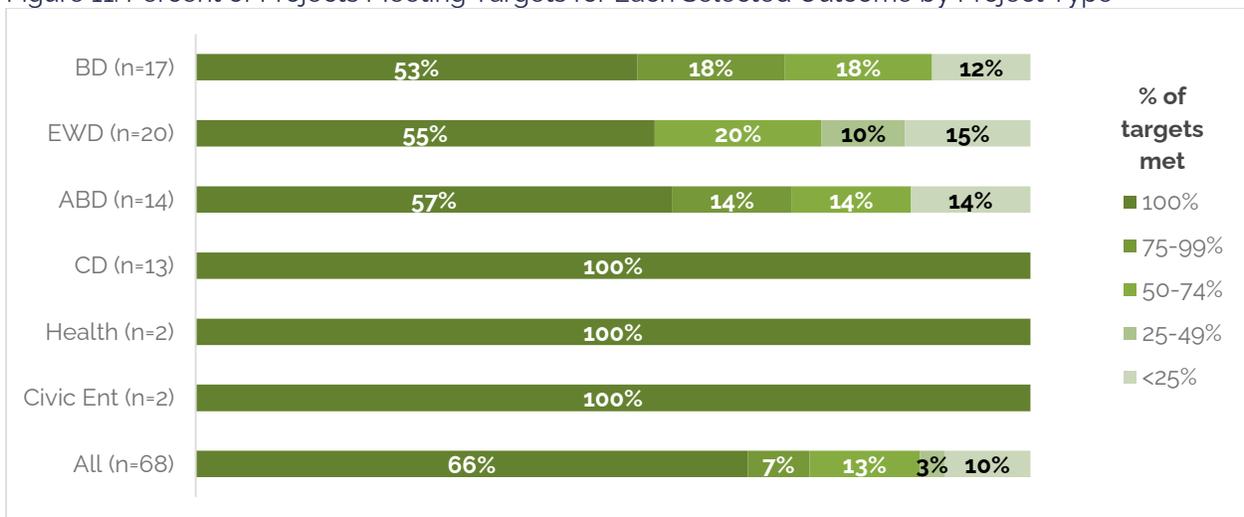
Individual Outputs and Outcomes: Percent of Targets Met

This section examines whether a project met the targets set for specific metrics, and if not, how close the project came to meeting the set target (differing from the previous section, which focused on the overall count of outputs/outcomes selected and the percentage of those outputs/outcomes that were met). In other words, if a project set a target of 100 businesses served, for example, it would meet the target at 95% or more if it served 95 or more businesses; would be at 75% of the target if it served 75; at 50% of the target if it served 50, etc.

Outputs

There were 15 output categories selected by projects with post-close measures. Table 14 provides a breakdown of the counts of projects that set targets for each output, as well as the count meeting or exceeding the set targets (95% or more); the count meeting 75-94% of the set target; 50-74%, etc.

There were eight output categories where all projects met or exceeded targets:

- Participants served (14/14)
- Organizations served (5/5)
- Patients served (3/3)
- Linear feet (2/2)
- New visitors – Days (2/2)
- Acreage (1/1)
- Data – Gigabytes (1/1)
- Households served (1/1)

There were three additional outputs where 90% or more projects achieved at least 75% of the target (e.g., if the set target was 100 businesses served, the project had at least 75 businesses served, etc.), including:

- Plans/reports: 52/57 (91%) met target; 54/57 (95%) met 75% or more of target
- Communities served: 31/36 (86%) met target; 33/36 (92%) met 75% or more of target
- Businesses served: 25/30 (83%) met target; 27/30 (90%) met 75% or more of target

Of the remaining four outputs, one (New visitors – Overnights) was selected by just two projects. One met or exceeded the target set, while the other did not.

For the three remaining:

- Students served: 8/11 (73%) met target; 9/11 (82%) met 75% or more of target
- Square feet: 3/5 (60%) met target; 4/5 (80%) met 75% or more of target
- Workers/trainees served: 11/16 (69%) met target; 12/16 (75%) met 75% of more of target

See Table 17.

Table 17: Percent of Target Met by Project Count: Outputs

Description (# selecting)	Percent of Target Met (Count/% of Projects)				
	95% or more	75%-94%	50%-74%	25%-49%	<25%
Acreage (n=1)	**1/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Businesses served (n=30)	25/83%	2/7%	0/0%	1/3%	2/7%
Communities served (n=36)	31/86%	2/6%	1/3%	1/3%	1/3%
Data – Gigabytes (n=1)	**1/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Households served (n=1)	**1/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Linear feet (n=2)	**2/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
New visitors – Days (n=2)	**2/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
New visitors – Overnights (n=2)	1/50%	0/0%	0/0%	0/0%	1/50%
Organizations served (n=5)	**5/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Participants served (n=14)	**14/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Patients served (n=3)	**3/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Plans/reports (n=57)	52/91%	2/4%	1/2%	1/2%	1/2%
Square feet (n=5)	3/60%	1/20%	0/0%	1/20%	0/0%
Students served (n=11)	8/73%	1/9%	2/18%	0/0%	0/0%
Workers/trainees served (n=16)	11/69%	1/6%	2/13%	0/0%	2/13%

Outputs in **bold** are those where all projects met set targets

Outcomes

There were 16 outcome categories selected by projects with post-close measures. Table 15 provides a breakdown of the counts of projects that set targets for each outcome, as well as the count meeting or exceeding the set targets (95% or more); the count meeting 75-94% of the set target; 50-74%, etc.

There were six outcome categories where all projects met or exceeded targets:

- Programs implemented (6/6)
- Organizations improved (5/5)
- Patients improved (3/3)
- Telecom sites (3/3)
- Households improved (1/1)
- Revenues increased – export (1/1)

There were two additional outcomes where 90% or more projects achieved at least 75% of the target (e.g., if the set target was 100 participants improved, the project had at least 75 participants improved, etc.), including:

- Participants improved: 12/13 (92%) met target; 13/13 (100%) met 75% or more of target
- Communities improved: 32/36 (89%) met target; 34/36 (94%) met 75% or more of target
- Communities served (31/36 (86%) met target; 33/36 (92%) met 75% or more of target)
- Businesses served (25/30 (83%) met target; 27/30 (90%) met 75% or more of target)

Of the remaining eight outcomes, one (Revenues increased - Nonexport) was selected by just four projects, and two met or exceeded targets for this outcome.

For the other seven:

- Businesses improved: 25/29 (86%) met target; 25/29 (86%) met 75% or more of target
- Jobs created: 21/27 (78%) met target; 21/27 (78%) met 75% or more of target
- Businesses created: 14/19 (74%) met target; 15/19 (79%) met 75% or more of target
- Jobs retained: 9/12 (75%) met target; 9/12 (75%) met 75% or more of target
- Leveraged private investment: 14/22 (64%) met target; 16/22 (73%) met 75% or more of target
- Students improved: 7/11 (64%) met target; 8/11 (73%) met 75% or more of target
- Workers/trainees improved: 9/16 (56%) met target; 12/16 (75%) met 75% or more of target

Table 18: Percent of Target Met by Project Count: Outcomes

| Description (# selecting) | Percent of Target Met (Count/% of Projects) | | | | |
	95% or more	75%-94%	50%-74%	25%-49%	<25%
Businesses created (n=19)	14/74%	1/5%	0/0%	2/11%	2/11%
Businesses improved (n=29)	25/86%	0/0%	1/3%	2/7%	1/3%
Communities improved (n=36)	32/89%	2/6%	0/0%	1/3%	1/3%
Households improved (n=1)	**1/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Jobs created (n=27)	21/78%	0/0%	2/7%	1/4%	3/11%
Jobs retained (n=12)	9/75%	0/0%	0/0%	2/17%	1/8%
Leveraged private investment (n=22)	14/64%	2/9%	3/14%	1/5%	2/9%
Organizations improved (n=5)	**5/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Participants improved (n=13)	12/92%	1/8%	0/0%	0/0%	0/0%
Patients improved (n=3)	**3/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Programs implemented (n=6)	**6/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Revenues increased – Export (n=1)	**1/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Revenues increased – Nonexport (n=4)	2/50%	0/0%	0/0%	1/25%	1/25%
Students improved (n=11)	7/64%	1/9%	0/0%	1/9%	2/18%
Telecom sites (n=3)	**3/100%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**	**0/0%**
Workers/trainees improved (n=16)	9/56%	3/19%	0/0%	1/6%	3/19%

Outcomes in **bold** are those where all projects met set targets

Appendix B
Methodology and Limitations
Methodology
Evaluation Questions and Data Collection Methodology

This report is the fourth annual report in a series of studies designed to help ARC and stakeholders to learn from the experiences of those implementing and benefitting from POWER, gauge results, and provide recommendations for the initiative's continuous improvement. A Year 1 (Fiscal Year 2019) Report was issued in October 2019 that focused on project strengths, challenges, and lessons learned. The Year 2/FY20 evaluation built on the FY19 evaluation with a focus on high-priority implementation topics, evaluation of new projects and those not previously evaluated, and assessment of the early results of closed POWER projects. The FY20 evaluation also included analysis of the early impacts of COVID-19 on POWER grantees, organizations, and communities. In total, grantees and partners representing about 200 projects were engaged in the first two years of evaluation.

In Year 3/FY21 the evaluation team collaborated with ARC staff to pilot an evaluation technique new to ARC and to POWER, *Most Significant Change (MSC).* A form of participatory evaluation and monitoring, MSC enables the articulation of both the values (the relative importance of different types of change) and value (reported change generated) of complex transformational initiatives with multiple types of beneficiaries, a wide variety of predefined indicators of change, and highly participatory interventions.[29] FY21 evaluation activities also included two COVID-19 impact surveys to monitor and update the changes POWER grantees made in response to COVID-19; concerns about POWER-funded projects, organizations, and communities; and feedback about the support grantees needed and/or accessed from ARC. These findings were summarized in companion reports to ARC.

Year 4/FY22 focused on five primary evaluation questions, including:

- To what extent did projects achieve outputs and outcomes? To what extent were outputs and outcomes achieved at project close versus one to three years after?
- What outcomes or impacts have been sustained after project close?
- What are the characteristics of individuals and communities served by POWER?
- To what extent have POWER projects served traditionally underserved communities in Appalachia and/or advanced equity?
- To what extent did POWER projects have unanticipated outcomes not originally targeted for measurement? What factors may have influenced this?

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[29] Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005). The 'Most Significant Change' technique - A guide to its use, Funded by CARE International, United KingdomOxfam Community Aid Abroad, Australia | Learning to Learn, Government of South AustraliaOxfam New Zealand | Christian Aid, United Kingdom | Exchange, United Kingdom Ibis, Denmark | Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke (MS), Denmark Lutheran World Relief, United States of America. Retrieved from http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf

The evaluation team also included several process-related questions specifically about POWER project measures (outputs and outcomes), including:

- How might ARC collect and assess post-close performance metrics in the future?
- Other than outputs and outcomes identified for the project, were there other outputs and outcomes that the grantee feels would have been more appropriate? If so, what are these and how might ARC measure them?
- To what extent was the reporting process effective and user-friendly, and what recommendations might grantees have for ways in which ARC might better standardize and systematize the reporting experience?

To address these questions, the evaluation team used a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, including retrieval of data from ARC's database (ARCnet), email follow up with grantees, and interviews and a survey. Data collection sources and methods included:

1. Document review of project narratives, approval memos, stated outputs and outcomes, and closeout reports submitted to ARC through its grants management system, ARCnet, for identified projects closed as of July 2021 (n=137 total projects with unique project IDs, including renewals or expansions/n=132 when excluding renewals or expansions).

2. Interviews with staff from projects closed as of or before September 2019, using a semi-structured inquiry process with interview protocols developed in collaboration with ARC staff. There were 59 projects (57 when excluding renewals or expansions without separate metrics reported) eligible for interviews, and staff representing 35 of the projects[30] participated in interviews.

3. Online survey of staff from projects closed between October 2019 and July 2021. There were 78 projects[31] (75 when excluding renewals or expansions without separate metrics reported) eligible to participate in the survey, and staff representing 35 of the projects[32] participated in the survey.

4. Output and outcome data extracted from ARCnet for all projects closed as of July 2022 (n=176 total projects with unique project IDs, including renewals or expansions; n=168 when counting only projects with their own projected and/or at-close metrics). To follow up with projects that had closed as of July 2021 or earlier (n=137 when counting all unique project IDs; n=132 when counting only those with their own metrics), the evaluation team created individual files with projected and at-close output and outcome numbers from ARCnet and

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[30] A total of 28 unique organizations participated in interviews, including two organizations with multiple projects. The 28 organizations represented 35 unique project IDs and 30 unique projects (3 projects were renewals, e.g., IM-R1, IM-R2, and 2 projects were expansions (e.g., IM-B, IM-C1) carried out by the same organizations as the initial project.

[31] Three projects that closed between October 2019 and July 2021 were excluded, because they were listed as cancelled in ARCnet.

[32] The survey had a total of 36 respondents representing 35 unique project IDs and 34 unique projects (one project was a renewal, e.g., IM-R1). There were two projects which each had responses from two individuals.

then sent those files via email to project contacts, requesting (where applicable) updated post-close numbers.

Document Review

The evaluation team used ARCnet to access closeout summaries, final reports, performance data, and project narratives for the 137 projects (counting all unique project IDs) closed as of July 2021 and candidates for post-close follow-up. In addition, for projects that were included in the Y1 or Y2 POWER evaluation, interview notes and case studies were reviewed. This review culminated in the creation of project profiles for each, which included an overview page, with information such as grantee contact, counties and state(s) served, summary from the closeout report, and summary from the Y1 or Y2 evaluation (where applicable), as well as any other notes deemed relevant to the Y4 evaluation. The second page included outputs and outcomes listed for the project, including projected and at close numbers. Finally, using descriptions from the closeout and final reports, project narrative, and notes in ARCnet, the evaluation team identified grantee-specific output and outcome definitions for the project and listed those next to the selected outputs and outcomes.

Semi-Structured Interviews and Online Survey

Beginning January 2022 for the survey group, and April 2022 for the interview group, the evaluation team sent an initial contact email to the contact in ARCnet. If the email was returned as undeliverable or with an automated reply that the contact had left the organization, the evaluation team worked to identify an alternative contact. First, the team contacted anyone listed in an automated reply. If the organization had no alternative contact, the evaluation team contacted another person at the organization associated with other POWER projects. If that avenue was not applicable to a project, the team researched the organizational structure and personnel to identify and contact whoever had filled the position. In most cases, the team also copied relevant organizational leadership (typically a president/CEO) to ensure the message was received. In cases when the replacement was unclear, only the president/CEO was contacted. If the response indicated nobody remained at the organization who could provide updates, the team made no further contact attempts.

For both types of projects, the team sent two reminders to grantees to update metrics and to schedule their interview (for interview-eligible projects) or reply to the survey (for survey-eligible projects). The final reminder of this round provided the opportunity to provide metrics updates only, if the grantee did not have the time or knowledge to respond to the request for interview or to the survey. In June 2022, the evaluation team engaged a contractor to make a final set of attempts to validate metrics. The contractor sent an initial email and placed up to two phone calls to the organization.

In total, up to six contact attempts were made, by phone and email, between January and June 2022.

The evaluation team conducted interviews using an online platform (either Teams or Zoom) with semi-structured interview protocols. The team created interview questions designed to address evaluation questions and shared drafts with key ARC staff for feedback. Based on

discussions, questions were then revised for clarity, resulting in the final interview protocols. The full set of interview questions is provided in Appendix C.

Online Survey

The evaluation team created an online survey using Survey Monkey, with questions designed to address aspects of the evaluation. Survey questions were primarily close ended, with three questions that had write-in options (if respondents selected "other" for one and "yes" for two others), as well as a final open-ended for additional feedback. The evaluation team developed the initial set of questions for the survey, which were then shared with key ARC staff and revised as necessary, resulting in the final set of questions. The full set of survey questions is provided in Appendix C.

Outputs and Outcomes

At the outset of the Y4 evaluation, the evaluation team extracted outputs and outcomes for the projects identified for either interviews or surveys (see Project Selection section), using ARCnet. The extraction included all projected and at-close numbers for outputs and outcomes, as well as post-close (validated) numbers for those that already had post-close data reported (n=7, collected through a validation process conducted by another group in summer of 2021). Then, the evaluation team submitted emails to project contacts (see Appendix C for email language) that included each project's projected and at-close output and outcome numbers, requesting that the contact (or designee) provide updated counts. Emails were sent to contacts representing 125 projects (this count excludes the seven previously validated projects; four projects that were renewals and did not have separate metrics set; and one project where at-close numbers for a renewal project had been reported together with at-close numbers for the initial project). Of the 125, 16 were determined not to be updateable, because the email was undeliverable and no other contact could be identified, or a contact at the organization indicated that the individual(s) overseeing the grant had left, and they had no forwarding information. Contacts from all but 12 projects deemed "updateable" responded to emails or phone calls. As a result, among the 132 projects identified (again, excluding from that count five that did not have targets or at-close numbers), a total of 109 (83%) had validated metrics collected (102 through this process and seven through the summer 2021 process).

Post-close outputs and outcomes collected from the 109 validated projects were inputted into an Excel file along with projected and at-close metrics. The evaluation team then extracted outputs and outcomes (from ARCnet) for any additional projects closed after July 2021 but in or before July 2022, as well as any other projects not included in the initial set (generally, those were administrative or research projects excluded by design, after consultation with ARC staff).

Project Selection

The evaluation team began by extracting a list of all projects from ARCnet and then identifying projects closed for two or more years as of October 2021, which were candidates for interviews ("Group A"). In addition, the evaluation team reviewed the project list and identified any other closed projects that were extensions of work carried out under projects

in Group A (e.g., IM-R1, IM-R2, etc.), and/or other closed projects carried out by the same grantee as those in Group A. Once that group was solidified, the evaluation team then identified any other projects closed by July 2021 ("Group B"). A total of 59 projects (when counting all unique project IDs, including renewal projects without separate proposed and/or at-close metrics reported; 57 when only counting projects with separate metrics) were identified for Group A, and contacts for these projects were invited to participate in interviews. Another 81 projects (when counting all unique project IDs, including renewal projects without separate proposed and/or at-close metrics reported; 78 when only counting projects with separate metrics) were identified for Group B. Upon further review, the evaluation team identified three projects that had been cancelled; those projects were then excluded from the group, leaving 78/75 projects remaining. Contacts for these projects were invited to participate in an online survey. All project contacts from Groups A and B were contacted via email (and then by phone) in an attempt to collect post-close output and outcome metrics. Finally, an additional 39 projects (when counting all unique project IDs; 36 when counting only projects with separate metrics) were identified that either had closed after July 2021 or were not included in the Group A/Group B project selection (generally because these were administrative projects). Though these projects were not invited to participate in either interviews or the survey, their output and outcome numbers were extracted from ARCnet and included in the overall results section.

Data Analysis and Reporting Methods

Interviews were conducted via Zoom or Teams. For most interviews, two members of the evaluation team participated, with one member facilitating using a semi-structured interview protocol and the other taking verbatim notes. Where it was not possible for two members of the team to participate, the session was recorded (with participant permission) and then transcripts were created from the recordings. After the interviews were completed, the evaluation team created a comprehensive file with general data components gathered through interviews and document review, including project number and name; close date; project description (from the closeout report); and counties and states of implementation. Data collected were analyzed using a general inductive approach, with the evaluation team reviewing raw, verbatim notes from interviews to identify themes by placing keywords, phrases, and direct quotes into an analysis matrix until themes emerged, as well as to allow for counts of grantees reporting each theme. Once all interview notes had been reviewed and keywords and quotes placed into the analysis matrix, preliminary themes were again reviewed and revised as necessary, until the final set of themes was determined. Once the matrix, with key themes and supporting keywords, phrases, and quotes was finalized, the evaluation team conducted a final review of raw notes to ensure that all data was appropriately captured.

Survey responses were collected through an online survey tool (Survey Monkey); once the survey was closed, all results were downloaded in an Excel file. Results of close-ended questions were analyzed using descriptive data analysis techniques (counts and percentages). Open-ended question responses were analyzed using a general inductive approach similar to the approach used for the interview data.

Proposed and at-close output and outcome data elements were extracted from ARCnet for all projects included in the study, and post-close metrics were collected via email or telephone. Proposed and at-close output and outcome counts were totaled for each project, and then totals for post-close measures (where reported) were totaled separately. For the overall results section, the evaluation team totaled at-close numbers for those projects without validated (post-close) metrics, and separately totaled post-close numbers for those projects with validated metrics reported. Then the evaluation team totaled post-close and validated numbers to create the overall results.

For the analysis of projects with post-close numbers only (the section reviewing the extent to which projects met proposed targets), only projects with post-close numbers were included. The evaluation team used descriptive analysis techniques to identify the percentage of projects meeting or exceeding targets set for proposed outputs and outcomes. "Exceeding target" was defined as achieving more than 100% of the anticipated target (e.g., if the project anticipated serving 100 students but reported serving 120, the result of 120% was considered "exceeding target"). "Meeting target" was defined as achieving at least 95% but not more than 100% of target. "Not meeting target" was defined as achieving less than 95% of target. To identify the percentage of projects meeting or exceeding total outputs and outcomes set, the evaluation team totaled the number of outputs and outcomes set (to create a denominator) and identified the number of outputs and outcomes meeting or exceeding target (to create a numerator). For example, if a project identified three outputs and three outcomes, the project's denominator was 6 (3+3). If the project met or exceeded two outputs and met or exceeded one outcome, the project's numerator was 3 (2+1). The project then would be placed in the "met 50%–74% of set outputs and outcomes" category (3/6 = 50%).

Finally, for analysis of performance within individual outputs and outcomes, the evaluation team totaled the number of projects selecting that output or outcome and then calculated the number of projects that exceeded (above 100% of target); met (95%–100% of target) or did not meet (below 95% of target) each output or outcome. For example, if eight projects selected Students Served and four projects met or exceeded targets, the result would be 50% (4/8) of projects meeting or exceeding target. The evaluation team also totaled proposed and post-close numbers within each metric to identify the percent of metric achieved post-close (e.g., if the sum of proposed targets for Students Served was 10,000, and the sum of post-close numbers for Students Served was 15,000, the percent of metric post-close would be 15,000/10,000 = 150%).

Limitations

Partial and Biased Findings

Qualitative and perceptual research and analysis methods are, by nature, partial and biased. To attempt to address this limitation, the evaluation triangulated data collected through multiple sources, including project narratives, close-out reports, semi-structured interviews, and a survey, as well as through post-interview and survey discussions within the evaluation team and with ARC staff.

Selection Bias

Selection bias is common in any form of design that does not involve random sampling or random assignment. This evaluation focused on closed POWER projects, including obtaining perception data via interview from projects closed for two or more years as of October 2021 (in other words, those projects closed by the end of September 2019), as well as perception data obtained via survey for projects closed October 2019 through July 2021. While the evaluation team employed a pre-defined method to identify interview and survey participants (described in the Project Selection section of this Appendix) in an attempt to ensure that grantees were the right fit to answer study questions, selection bias may still be present, and themes and responses from evaluation participants may not be reflective of the experiences of all POWER grantees, or those with closed projects (see also Convenience Sampling limitations, in the next section). Further, grantees were aware that the evaluation was being conducted on behalf of ARC, and some either had received additional POWER funding or were seeking POWER funding. This may introduce the potential for participants to feel pressured to speak favorably about project implementation and the funder (ARC). To try to mitigate this, the evaluation team informed interview participants that their feedback would be confidential in the case of discussing challenges (while challenges may be associated with grant projects, comments would not be associated with individual interview participants) or anonymized in the case of feedback about ARC. Neutral, negative, and sometimes critical feedback from a wide variety of grantees and partners supports the notion that grantees felt comfortable to share their experiences, both positive and negative.

Convenience Sampling

Using the selection methodology described in the Project Selection section of this Appendix, the evaluation team identified candidates for virtual interviews, as well as candidates for an online survey. While all grantees had the opportunity to participate in either the interview or the survey (based on selection criteria), organizations could elect to participate. As such, interview themes and survey results reflect only the perceptions of those who participated, and their experiences may not be the same as all POWER grantees, or all closed POWER grantees.

Researcher Interview Bias

Although a semi-structured interview protocol was used for each interview, it is possible that an individual researcher's methods for asking initial or follow-up questions may have inadvertently introduced bias into responses. To attempt to mitigate this issue, the evaluation team reviewed the interview protocol questions collaboratively prior to conducting any interviews. The same protocol was used for all interviews. Where possible, two evaluation team members covered all interviews, with one conducting the interview and the other taking verbatim notes which were then shared in a common system. Moreover, all sessions were recorded (with participant permission) so that notes could be reviewed against the real-time discussion. Where it was only possible to have one interviewer, the session was recorded, with participant permission, and then transcribed

after the fact. In addition, evaluation team members reviewed findings and interpretations collaboratively, as discussed in the next section on researcher extrapolation bias.

Researcher Extrapolation Bias

Analysis conducted within an interpretative analytical framework is threatened by the fact that researcher interpretation is personal and may go beyond what is present in and supported by actual data. As described in the Data Analysis and Reporting Methods section of this Appendix, indeed the evaluation team employed its own interpretations of data collected through multiple methods, including using POWER-specific findings coupled with findings and experiences of evaluations previously conducted by the team. To mitigate researcher extrapolation limitations, the evaluation team individually reviewed and analyzed raw data collected through interviews and the survey; identified themes were collaboratively discussed and refined as a team; and evaluators introduced and discussed any contradictory evidence for themes as it arose. However, themes, findings, and recommendations that were identified through this evaluation may not be suitable for or reflective of all POWER grantees.

Missing Data

While at-close data for outputs and outcomes was available for all closed projects through ARCnet, post-close data (for those projects closed as of July 2021 or earlier) was collected via email, using project profiles created by the evaluation team which included projected and at-close outputs and outcomes data. There were 132 projects closed as of July 2021 that had outputs and outcomes targets set and at-close measures reported (as noted in the body of the report, there were a total of 137 unique project IDs, but five either did not have separate targets or reported at-close and validated data for the renewal project as part of the initial project). Of the 132, 104 (79%) responded to requests for post-close data, either as part of this evaluation process or part of a collection process conducted in summer of 2021. Among the 28 non-respondents, 16 were deemed to be uncontactable, either because emails bounced (and there were no other contacts on file), or contacts at the grantee organization indicated that the original implementers were no longer with the organization and had no forwarding contact information. The remaining 12 were contacted multiple times in an attempt to obtain information, but without success. As such, the data reported and discussed in the post-close section represents only those 104 projects for which post-close data was reported.

Appendix C

Interview and Survey Questions and Email Template

Interview Questions

2022 Post-close Impact Interview Questions

Note: The following questions will serve as a general guide for a semi-structured, conversational interview and will build from any previous evaluation conversations that have occurred for your project. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, and some questions may not apply to all projects.

Project Impact

1. How, if at all, has POWER funding affected the following groups in the time since closeout:
    a. Individuals
    b. Businesses
    c. Communities
    d. Organizations, including yours and those of your partners
    e. The region more broadly
2. To what extent did this project help build and/or sustain partnerships in the region? Are any of the partnerships still functioning?
3. What lasting impact(s), if any, do you attribute to this POWER project?
4. What factors have contributed to that impact?
5. Do you anticipate or have you identified any challenges that might inhibit lasting impact?

Service Area(s) and Populations

6. The evaluation team will retrieve and discuss the service area in your project's closeout report.
7. In the context of your project, what did it mean to "serve" your selected county/region? (e.g., services were available in an area, regardless of use; individuals in those areas were documented as participating; planning project included the area in analysis, etc.)
8. Which historically underserved groups, if any, did your project reach?
9. What difficulties, if any, did you have reaching historically underserved groups?

Performance Measurement

10. On a scale of 1-10, how difficult was it to update performance measures for this evaluation, with 1 being least difficult and 10 being most difficult?
11. How did you track and store data for your project?
12. What, if anything, presents barriers or challenges to tracking data as you would like to?
13. Do the project's performance metrics accurately capture its impact? Why or why not?

14. How, if at all, should ARC change performance measurement and reporting for POWER?
15. What other feedback, if any, do you have for ARC regarding POWER?

Survey Questions

Thank you for taking a few minutes to provide your perspective on the strengths, challenges, and impacts of your POWER project in the time since it closed. Your responses will be confidential, and your name and organization will not be associated with your responses.

1. Please confirm your project details (for survey completion tracking only)

Project Name:
Project Number

2. During your project period, to what degree was your project/project team able to:

	Completely	Mostly	Somewhat	Not at All	Don't Know	Not Applicable
Develop and sustain necessary partnerships						
Recruit and retain participants (people, businesses, and/or communities)						
Tailor programming/approach to meet participant needs						
Adapt programming/approach to changing external circumstances						
Leverage organizational experience/reputation to achieve results						
Garner necessary buy-in from relevant communities						
Build on external momentum						
Tell your story effectively						

3. To what extent did the following items present challenges for your project/project team?

	Significant Challenge	Moderate Challenge	Minor Challenge	Not At All a Challenge	Don't Know	Not Applicable

Delays with implementation

Reluctance or reticence among potential participants

Project staffing/capacity

Resource constraints

Partner capacity/commitment

4. To what extent are you confident you could fully report on outputs and outcomes up to three years after your project close date, if ARC were to ask for updates?

   o Completely
   o Mostly
   o Somewhat
   o Not at all
   o Not applicable – our outputs/outcomes achieved will not change after project closure

5. What factors, if any, do you anticipate would prevent you from fully reporting on outputs and outcomes up to three years after the project close date? (Choose all that apply).

   o Inability to find/follow up with participants
   o Staff capacity
   o Lack of clarity on requirements for updating outputs and outcomes
   o Lack of an easy-to-use internal data system
   o Reliance on partners (issues with partner reporting)
   o Other: please specify
   o Not applicable – our outputs/outcomes achieved will not change after project closure

6. Were there any counties or regions you were unable to serve as outlined in your scope of work?
   o No
   o Yes (please describe)

7. Has your project had any additional impacts or successes in the time since closure?
   o No
   o Yes (please describe)

8. How would you describe the POWER reporting process, as compared to similar grants (in size and complexity) from other funders?
   o Very easy
   o Easy

- o Difficult
- o Very difficult
- o Don't know

9. Please provide any other feedback for ARC related to POWER including impacts, reporting, or other topics.

Email Template

Projects Identified for Interviews

SUBJECT: POWER Project [NUMBER] – Post-Close Metrics and Impact Interview

[GREETING],

Under the Appalachian Regional Commission, this year's POWER evaluation is focused on collecting post-close results and gathering updated qualitative information about the extent to which funded projects have had additional impacts. A condition of your award from ARC for PROJECT was to provide the Appalachian Regional Commission with updated performance measures up to three years post-close.

If you are not the correct contact for this request, could you please forward this email to the right contact and copy me so ARC's records can be updated?

The post-close evaluation has two components:

1. We ask that you, or someone else from your organization familiar with your POWER project, go here to select a time for a virtual, one-hour evaluation interview that will build from any previous evaluation conversations that have occurred for your project. Times are available on a first-come, first-served basis from mid-February through late May. See the attached interview guide for a list of topics that will be covered. Please make a selection by Monday, January 31.

2. Prior to your selected interview time, please update your outputs and outcomes in the table below and send them to me via email. If you are unable to update any metric, please indicate which metric and provide a brief explanation of the reason an update cannot occur.

[METRICS TABLE]

Thank you in advance for the information and your participation. Please let me know if you have any questions or if this email should be directed to someone else.

Projects Identified for Survey

SUBJECT: Response Requested: Updates to Closed POWER Project [INSERT PROJECT NUMBER]

[GREETING]

As part of the agreement with the Appalachian Regional Council for [INSERT POWER PROJECT], you agreed to update ARC on changes to your outputs and outcomes, if any, for up to three years post-close. ARC has contracted with Chamberlin/Dunn to gather these updates (or confirmation of no change) and to gather grantee perspectives about POWER projects and performance metrics. This process includes two steps:

1. Updating or confirming no changes to your performance metrics table below

2. Completing a very brief, 5-minute questionnaire [INSERT LINK]

Below is a table with your outputs and outcomes—as Planned (labeled POP/POC) and Actual at close (labeled AOP/AOC), with a box to Validate either that no changes have occurred or to report any updates to outputs and outcomes (labeled VOP/VOC). Please complete the blanks by Friday, May 13 with changes or with a confirmation of no change. Please note any cases where you anticipate updates over the next 1-3 years.

]METRICS TABLE]

Additionally, by May 13, please take 5 minutes to go to [INSERT LINK] and answer 9 questions about project execution and provide your opinion on POWER performance metrics. (It is also acceptable for someone else from the project team to complete this survey.)

Finally, we know project contacts change. If you are not the right contact for this request, please forward this to the appropriate person and copy me so I can update ARC's records.

Thank you for your time and attention to this request. Please let me know if you have any questions about any of the components of this process.

Appendix D
Projects Included in the Y4 Evaluation
Interview and Survey Participants

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name
CO-18304	Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc.	UNLEASHING THE POWER OF THE I-WAY: Capacity Building for Economic Development Professionals
CO-18314	Rural Action, Inc.	Emerging Opportunities in Social Enterprise Development
PW-18458-IM-B	Williamson Health & Wellness Center, Inc	Downtown Wi-Fi Access in Williamson, WV
PW-18458-IM-C	Haleyville, City of	Haleyville Cool & Connected
PW-18458-IM-D	Bluefield, City of	Bluefield- Cool and Connected
PW-18458-IM-E	Portsmouth Murals Inc.	Portsmouth Floodwall Murals Digital Access Project
PW-18496-IM PW-18496-IM-R1	Coalfield Development Corporation	Appalachian Social Entrepreneurship Investment Strategy
PW-18499-TA	The EdVenture Group	Grant-Writing Assistance for CODE: Creating Opportunities, Diversifying Economy Project Proposal
PW-18507-TA	National Association of Counties Research Foundation	Stronger Economies in Coal-Reliant Places
PW-18511-TA	Youngstown State University	Advanced Manufacturing Innovation & Commercialization Center
PW-18594-IM	Pennsylvania Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, Inc.	Nature Tourism Cluster Development in the PA Wilds
PW-18600-IM	Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc.	TechHire Eastern Kentucky (TEKY) Initiative: Developing a Technology-Driven Workforce to Transform Rural Appalachia
PW-18601-IM	Appalachian Sustainable Development	The Central Appalachian Food Enterprise Corridor
PW-18609-IM	University of Pikeville	Kentucky College of Optometry: Equipment
PW-18610-IM	Ohio University	Leveraging Innovation Gateways and Hubs Toward Sustainability (LIGHTS)
PW-18617-TA	West Virginia Development Office	Hobet Strategic Plan
PW-18670-TA	West Virginia Community Development Hub	Economic Diversification Mentoring for Innovation Acceleration Strategy Communities
PW-18673-I	West Virginia University Research Corporation	Economic Analysis of Coal Industry Ecosystem in Appalachian
PW-18688-IM	Region 1 – Planning and Development Council	Coalfields Cluster Mapping Initiative
PW-18706-TA	Randolph County Development Authority	Hardwood Industry Cluster Strategic Plan
PW-18713-TA	UMWA Career Centers Inc.	ARC POWER TA Grant Application Development
PW-18720-TA	Region 4 Planning and Development Council	UKV Revitalization Plan
PW-18729-IM	Center for Rural Entrepreneurship	Building Entrepreneurial Communities: The Foundation of an Economic Transition for Appalachia
PW-18730-TA	Williamson Health & Wellness Center, Inc	Healthy Workforce Initiative: Workforce Empowerment and Opioid Recovery Center
PW-18777-IM	Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAPDC)	The Alleghenies Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
PW-18778-IM	Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc.	The Heart of Appalachia Economic Transition Project

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name
PW-18780-TA	Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, Inc.	I-68 Regional Economic Partnership
PW-18781-TA	Appalachian Voices	Southwest Virginia Renewable Energy and Economy Project
PW-18782-TA	Virginia Coalfield Coalition, Inc	Virginia Coalfields Telecommunications Planning Grant
PW-18783-TA	Northwest PA Regional Planning and Development Commission	Northwest PA Broadband Assessment
PW-18789-IM	FAHE	Uplift Appalachia Recovery
PW-18791-IM	UMWA Career Centers Inc.	New Start Retraining Initiative for Dislocated Coal Industry Workers
PW-18794-IM PW-18794-IM-B PW-18794-IM-R1 PW-18794-IM-R2	Whitesburg, City of	Whitesburg Daniel Boone Hotel Stabilization
PW-18798-TA	Workforce Initiative Association	Coal Business United Resource Network (Coal BURN) Real-Time Insights for Real-Time Actions
PW-18799-TA	Unlimited Future, Inc.	Beefing Up the Local Food Economy
PW-18800-IM	Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation	Kentucky Highlands Employment and Financial Training Program
PW-18801-IM	Mountain Empire Community College	Power Lineman Career Education at Mountain Empire, PLCEME
PW-18802-TA	Alabama Center for Sustainable Energy (ALCSE) DBA ENERGY ALABAMA	Alabama Advanced Energy Economic Impact Report (AAEEIR)
PW-18847-IM	Canaan Valley Institute	Sustainable Jobs Initiative
PW-18917-IM	Natural Capital Investment Fund, Inc	Growing Food System Capacity and Scaling Economic Impact in Central Appalachia
PW-18918-IM PW-18918-IM-C1	Ohio University	Social Enterprise Ecosystem: SEE Social Enterprise Ecosystem II
PW-18923-IM PW-18923-IM-R1	Morehead State University	Shaping Our Appalachian Region Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (SOAR STEM) Initiative
PW-18927-TA	Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, Inc.	Restoring PRIDE in Kentucky's Appalachia
PW-19124-IM	Hazard Community and Technical College	Intergenerational Training Center
PW-19330-TA	Mayland Community College	Redeveloping Coal Impacted Communities within the Appalachian Region: The Role of Community Colleges in Entrepreneurial Training and the Opioid Crisis
PW-19331-TA	Piedmont Triad Regional Council	Dream. Career. Academy. Workforce Development Training and Education Hub Plan
PW-19337-TA	Buckeye Hills Regional Council	U.S. 33 Corridor Broadband Feasibility Project
PW-19341-TA	National Coal Heritage Area Authority	Tug Fork River Water Trail Access Plan
PW-19342-IM	Coalfield Development Corporation	SEED-LIFT: Social Enterprise and Economic Diversification - Leveraging Investment For Transformation
PW-19371-IM	West Virginia Forest Products Cooperative, Inc.	West Virginia Forest Products Cooperative
PW-19392-TA	Women''s Institute for a Secure Retirement	Benefit U: An Entrepreneur''s Guide to Financial, Health Insurance & Retirement Solutions
PW-19396-TA	Growth Partnership for Ashtabula	Rail and Port Transportation Strategic Plan
PW-19458-TA	Vinton County Commissioners	Broadband Infrastructure Improvement - Vinton & Meigs County
PW-19459-TA	Lewis County Fiscal Court	Lewis County Broadband Strategic Plan and Feasibility Study
PW-19464-IM	Morgantown Sober Living, Inc.	Reintegrate Appalachia: Job Creation and Workforce Development for West Virginians Impacted by Substance Use Disorders

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name
PW-19477-TA	Marshall University Research Corporation	Craft Beer and Spirit Trail
PW-19478-TA	The Industrial Commons	Planning for a Textile and Furniture Circular Economy
PW-19480-TA	North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission	Regional Freight & Mobility Plan for Coal Impacted Communities in North Central PA
PW-19481-TA	New River Gorge Trail Alliance	Linking Trails and Communities to Spawn Economic Growth and Wellness: Expanding the Southern West Virginia Bike Trail Network
PW-19672-TA	Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc.	Washington Electric Cooperative Broadband Feasibility Study
PW-19673-TA	Rockwood Electric Utility	Rockwood Electric Utility Smart Grid Technology Plan
PW-19686-IM	WV Regional Technology Park Corp	Broadband Infrastructure to Augment Educational and Industry Cluster Development at the West Virginia Regional Technology Park
PW-19689-TA	Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAPDC)	South-Central Pennsylvania Broadband Infrastructure Assessment
PW-19699-TA	Friends of the Cheat, Inc.	Mountaineer Trail Network: Preston County Pilot Trail Plan

Projects with Outputs and Outcomes Included

The table includes a list of grant projects with outputs and outcomes included this evaluation report. Those with Y in the Post-Close column were asked for and reported post-close metrics; N indicates that post-close metrics were requested but not reported; "none" indicates that the project did not have metrics (typically these were follow-on projects); and N/A indicates that post-close metrics were not requested for the project (generally because the project closed after July 2021). Projects with an asterisk (*) next to the N were determined non-contactable. Projects with ** had post-close metrics collected through a different process (conducted in summer 2021).

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
AL-18741-IM	Bevill State Community College	Bevill State Community College POWER 2017	N
CO-18304	Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc.	UNLEASHING THE POWER OF THE I-WAY: Capacity Building for Economic Development Professionals	Y
CO-18314	Rural Action, Inc.	Emerging Opportunities in Social Enterprise Development	Y
PW-18317	Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAPDC)	Export Promotion for the Mining Equipment Supply Chain	Y
PW-18458	US Environmental Protection Agency	Cool & Connected Broadband Program	N*
PW-18458-IM-A	Zanesville, City Of	Zanesville Cool & Connected Broadband Program	Y
PW-18458-IM-B	Williamson Health & Wellness Center, Inc	Downtown Wi-Fi Access in Williamson, WV	Y
PW-18458-IM-C	Haleyville, City of	Haleyville Cool & Connected	Y
PW-18458-IM-D	Bluefield, City of	Bluefield- Cool and Connected	Y
PW-18458-IM-E	Portsmouth Murals Inc.	Portsmouth Floodwall Murals Digital Access Project	Y
PW-18458-IM-G	Town of Pennington Gap	Cool & Connected - Pennington Gap	N

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
PW-18458-IM-H	Erwin Utilities	Cool & Connected Downtown Erwin Entrepreneurs Business Grant	N*
PW-18477	Kentucky Department for Local Government	Kentucky Power Initiative Supplemental Consolidated Assistance Grant	N/A
PW-18496-IM	Coalfield Development Corporation	Appalachian Social Entrepreneurship Investment Strategy	Y
PW-18496-IM-R1	Coalfield Development Corporation	Appalachian Social Entrepreneurship Investment Strategy	Y
PW-18499-TA	The EdVenture Group	Grant-Writing Assistance for CODE: Creating Opportunities, Diversifying Economy Project Proposal	Y
PW-18507-TA	National Association of Counties Research Foundation	Stronger Economies in Coal-Reliant Places	Y
PW-18511-TA	Youngstown State University	Advanced Manufacturing Innovation & Commercialization Center	Y
PW-18580-TA	Southern Research Institute	Fostering Entrepreneurial Activity in Coal Impacted Communities in Alabama	Y
PW-18587	National Institute on Drug Abuse	ARC/National Institutes of Health Interagency Agreement on HIV, HCV and Opioid Overdose	N*
PW-18587-C1	National Institute on Drug Abuse	ARC/National Institutes of Health Interagency Agreement on HIV, HCV and Opioid Overdose: Year 2	None
PW-18590-IM	University of Kentucky Research Foundation	Downtown Revitalization in the Promise Zone	N
PW-18594-IM	Pennsylvania Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, Inc.	Nature Tourism Cluster Development in the PA Wilds	Y
PW-18599-IM	New River Gorge Regional Development Authority	New River Gorge Region - Developing an Entrepreneurial Economy (HIVE)	N
PW-18600-IM	Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc.	TechHire Eastern Kentucky (TEKY) Initiative: Developing a Technology-Driven Workforce to Transform Rural Appalachia	Y
PW-18601-IM	Appalachian Sustainable Development	The Central Appalachian Food Enterprise Corridor	Y
PW-18606-IM	Hatfield McCoy Regional Recreation Authority	Southern Coalfields Sustainable Tourism & Entrepreneurship Program	N
PW-18609-IM	University of Pikeville	Kentucky College of Optometry: Equipment	Y
PW-18610-IM	Ohio University	Leveraging Innovation Gateways and Hubs Toward Sustainability (LIGHTS)	Y
PW-18611-IM	Bluewell Public Service District	Mercer County Regional Airport Development and Diversification Initiative	N/A
PW-18611-IM-R1	Bluewell Public Service District	Mercer County Regional Airport Development and Diversification Initiative	None
PW-18612-IM	Marion County, Tennessee	Marion County Regional Center for Higher Education Phase II & III	Y
PW-18614-IM	Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education	EntreEd K-14: Every Student, Every Year	Y
PW-18616-IM	Southwest Virginia Community College	REDI Center for Dislocated Coal Miners	Y
PW-18617-TA	West Virginia Development Office	Hobet Strategic Plan	Y
PW-18622-IM	MACED	Economic Transition for Eastern Kentucky (ETEK) Initiative	N/A
PW-18625	NC Department of Commerce	North Carolina POWER Initiative Supplemental Consolidated Technical Assistance	N/A

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
PW-18625-C1	NC Department of Commerce	North Carolina POWER Initiative Supplemental Consolidated Technical Assistance	N/A
PW-18625-C2	NC Department of Commerce	North Carolina POWER Initiative Supplemental Consolidated Technical Assistance	N/A
PW-18626-IM	Shoals Entrepreneurial Center	Shoals Shift	Y
PW-18632-TA	West Virginia Connecting Communities Inc	Linking Trails and Communities to Spawn Economic Growth and Wellness: The Southern West Virginia Bike Trail Network	Y
PW-18634	PA Department of Community & Economic Development	Pennsylvania POWER Initiative Supplemental Consolidated Technical Assistance	N/A
PW-18635-IM	RAIN Source Capital Inc	Appalachian Angel Investor Network	Y
PW-18642-IM	Southwest Virginia Community College	Southwest Virginia Regional Cybersecurity Initiative	Y
PW-18654-TA	Rural Action, Inc.	Appalachian Ohio Solar Supply-Chain Initiative	Y**
PW-18655-TA	Central WV ATV Trail System Feasibility Study	Webster County Economic Development Authority	N
PW-18670-TA	Economic Diversification Mentoring for Innovation Acceleration Strategy Communities	West Virginia Community Development Hub	Y
PW-18673	Economic Analysis of Coal Industry Ecosystem in Appalachian	West Virginia University Research Corporation	Y
PW-18674-TA	Reconnecting McDowell	Reconnecting McDowell, Inc.	Y
PW-18678-IM	Erwin Utilities - Temple Hill & Bumpus Cove Broadband	Erwin Utilities	Y**
PW-18685-IM	Revitalization of Southwestern Pennsylvania Coal-Impacted Communities through Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Innovation Works Inc.	Y**
PW-18688-IM	Coalfields Cluster Mapping Initiative	Region 1 – Planning and Development Council	Y
PW-18690-IM	Sprouting Farms	Marshall University Research Corporation	Y
PW-18699-IM	WV Rural Health Infrastructure Loan Fund	Center for Rural Health Development, Inc.	N/A
PW-18705	Strengthening Economic Resilience in Appalachian Communities	Downstream Strategies	N/A
PW-18706-TA	Randolph County Development Authority	Hardwood Industry Cluster Strategic Plan	Y
PW-18707-IM	Town of Unicoi	Unicoi - Mountain Harvest Kitchen Incubator & Entrepreneurial Training Program	N/A
PW-18711-TA	Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network	Grant-Writing Assistance for "A Bolder Brew, a Brighter Bouquet: Strengthening the Craft Beverage Cluster Across Southwest Virginia"	Y**
PW-18713-TA	UMWA Career Centers Inc.	ARC POWER TA Grant Application Development	Y
PW-18714-IM	Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation	Southwest Pennsylvania Economic Gardening Initiative	Y
PW-18720-TA	Region 4 Planning and Development Council	UKV Revitalization Plan	Y

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
PW-18726-IM	Hocking College	Appalachia RISES, Appalachia is Revitalizing an Industry-ready Skilling Ecosystem for Sustainability	Y**
PW-18729-IM	Center for Rural Entrepreneurship	Building Entrepreneurial Communities: The Foundation of an Economic Transition for Appalachia	Y
PW-18730-TA	Williamson Health & Wellness Center, Inc	Healthy Workforce Initiative: Workforce Empowerment and Opioid Recovery Center	Y
PW-18755-IM-B	West Alabama Chamber Foundation, Inc. dba West Alabama Works	WAW's 2020 Initiative Construction	Y
PW-18770-IM	Maysville Community and Technical College	KY-WV Regional Drone Technology Workforce Project	N
PW-18773-IM	Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc.	Transitioning from Black to Blue: Training Former Coal Workers for Natural Gas Utility and Pipeline Careers in Appalachia	Y
PW-18777-IM	Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAPDC)	The Alleghenies Entrepreneurial Ecosystem	Y
PW-18778-IM	Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc.	The Heart of Appalachia Economic Transition Project	N
PW-18779-IM	West Virginia University Research Corporation	Manufacturing Value Stream for Shale	Y
PW-18780-TA	Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, Inc.	I-68 Regional Economic Partnership	Y
PW-18781-TA	Appalachian Voices	Southwest Virginia Renewable Energy and Economy Project	Y
PW-18782-TA	Virginia Coalfield Coalition, Inc	Virginia Coalfields Telecommunications Planning Grant	Y
PW-18783-TA	Northwest PA Regional Planning and Development Commission	Northwest PA Broadband Assessment	Y
PW-18784-TA	Armstrong County Industrial Development Council	Armstrong County 2017 POWER Technical Assistance	N
PW-18785-TA	Grayson LandCare, Inc.	Blue Ridge Plateau Abattoir Regional Partnership	N
PW-18788-IM	WV Regional Technology Park Corp	Green Mining Model Business Program	Y
PW-18789-IM	FAHE	UPLIFT Appalachia Recovery	Y
PW-18790-IM	Kentucky Community and Technical College System/DBA - Big Sandy Community and Technical College	Eastern Kentucky Coal County Transformation	N/A
PW-18791-IM	UMWA Career Centers Inc.	New Start Retraining Initiative for Dislocated Coal Industry Workers	Y
PW-18794-IM	Whitesburg, City of	Whitesburg Daniel Boone Hotel Stabilization	Y
PW-18794-IM-B	Whitesburg, City of	Whitesburg Daniel Boone Hotel Stabilization	Y
PW-18794-IM-R1	Whitesburg, City of	Whitesburg Daniel Boone Hotel Stabilization	None
PW-18794-IM-R2	Whitesburg, City of	Whitesburg Daniel Boone Hotel Stabilization	None
PW-18795-TA	Jobs for the Future, Inc	Career Online High School: A Leaping Strategy for Appalachian Communities	Y
PW-18798-TA	Workforce Initiative Association	Coal Business United Resource Network (Coal BURN) Real-Time Insights for Real-Time Actions	Y
PW-18799-TA	Unlimited Future, Inc.	Beefing Up the Local Food Economy	Y

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
PW-18800-IM	Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation	Kentucky Highlands Employment and Financial Training Program	Y
PW-18801-IM	Mountain Empire Community College	Power Lineman Career Education at Mountain Empire, PLCEME	Y
PW-18802-TA	Alabama Center for Sustainable Energy (ALCSE) DBA ENERGY ALABAMA	Alabama Advanced Energy Economic Impact Report (AAEEIR)	Y
PW-18817-IM	Huntington Municipal Development Authority	Polymer Technology Center of Huntington (P-TeCH) Project	N*
PW-18847-IM	Canaan Valley Institute	Sustainable Jobs Initiative	Y
PW-18864	American Association of Community Colleges	Industry-Informed Infrastructure in Appalachian Colleges	Y
PW-18895-IM-A	Region 4 Planning and Development Council	Linking Trails and Communities to Spawn Economic Growth: The Southern WV Bike Trail Network	N*
PW-18914-TA	KVC Health Systems, Inc.	KVC Health Systems College	N*
PW-18916-IM	Bluefield State College	Center of Excellence in Manufacturing Education (CEME) at Bluefield State	N/A
PW-18917-IM	Natural Capital Investment Fund, Inc	Growing Food System Capacity and Scaling Economic Impact in Central Appalachia	Y
PW-18918-IM	Ohio University	Social Enterprise Ecosystem: SEE	Y**
PW-18918-IM-C1	Ohio University	Social Enterprise Ecosystem II	Y
PW-18920-IM	PRIDE Community Services	BuildJobs Initiative	N/A
PW-18921-IM	Southern Research Institute	The Prosperity Fund - Fostering Entrepreneurial Activity in Coal Impacted Communities in Alabama	N*
PW-18923-IM	Morehead State University	Shaping Our Appalachian Region Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (SOAR STEM) Initiative	Y
PW-18923-IM-R1	Morehead State University	Shaping Our Appalachian Region Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (SOAR STEM) Initiative	None
PW-18925-IM	Buckeye Hills Regional Council	Innovation Gateway Network of Appalachian Ohio	N*
PW-18926-IM	Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc.	ARCODE Initiative – Appalachian Region Code Initiative	Y
PW-18927-TA	Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, Inc.	Restoring PRIDE in Kentucky's Appalachia	Y**
PW-18939-IM	Tennessee Technology Development Corp DBA LaunchTN	LaunchTN's Entrepreneurial Education & Workforce Development	Y
PW-18939-IM-R1	Tennessee Technology Development Corp DBA LaunchTN	LaunchTN's Entrepreneurial Education & Workforce Development	None
PW-18939-IM-R2	Tennessee Technology Development Corp DBA LaunchTN	LaunchTN's Entrepreneurial Education & Workforce Development	None
PW-18940-IM	Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College	Southeast Kentucky Revitalization Project	N/A
PW-18941-IM	Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College	Selling to the World Initiative	Y
PW-18942-IM	Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc.	Southwestern PA Development of a Local Food Shed	N/A
PW-18982	Oak Ridge Associated Universities	Technical Assistance Support for POWER Grantees	N*
PW-19038-TA	Southern Appalachian Labor School	Entrepreneur Coalfield Alternative Opportunity (ECAO)	Y
PW-19075	VA Department of Housing & Community Development	VA DHCD Administrative Costs for Appalachian Spring POWER Project	N/A

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
PW-19124-IM	Hazard Community and Technical College	Intergenerational Training Center	Y
PW-19330-TA	Mayland Community College	Redeveloping Coal Impacted Communities within the Appalachian Region: The Role of Community Colleges in Entrepreneurial Training and the Opioid Crisis	Y
PW-19331-TA	Piedmont Triad Regional Council	Dream. Career. Academy. Workforce Development Training and Education Hub Plan	Y
PW-19332-IM	Community College of Beaver County	TEAMing Up to Build Pathways to Jobs	N/A
PW-19335-TA	SEDA-Council of Governments	Central PA Rural Broadband Coverage and Feasibility Study	Y
PW-19336-TA	West Virginia Geological & Economic Survey	State of West Virginia Broadband Development Hub	Y
PW-19337-TA	Buckeye Hills Regional Council	U.S. 33 Corridor Broadband Feasibility Project	Y
PW-19338-IM	Catalyst Connection	PA MAKES: Mini-Grants for Small Manufacturers	N
PW-19341-TA	National Coal Heritage Area Authority	Tug Fork River Water Trail Access Plan	Y
PW-19342-IM	Coalfield Development Corporation	SEED-LIFT: Social Enterprise and Economic Diversification - Leveraging Investment For Transformation	Y
PW-19357-TA	Pennsylvania Environmental Council	Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and PA Wilds Loop - Feasibility Study	Y
PW-19359-IM	Appalachian Artisan Center, Inc	Troublesome Creek Stringed Instruments Company	N/A
PW-19369-IM	Ohio University	Appalachian Recovery Project: An Ohio Opioid Workforce Initiative	N/A
PW-19371-IM	West Virginia Forest Products Cooperative, Inc.	West Virginia Forest Products Cooperative	Y
PW-19373-IM	Mountain BizCapital, Inc. dba Mountain BizWorks	Growing Outdoors: Expanding the Outdoor Gear Manufacturing Sector	N/A
PW-19384-TA	Region II Development Council, Inc.	Appalachian Heartland Highway Initiative	N/A
PW-19392-TA	Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement	Benefit U: An Entrepreneur's Guide to Financial, Health Insurance & Retirement Solutions	Y
PW-19396-TA	Growth Partnership for Ashtabula	Rail and Port Transportation Strategic Plan	Y
PW-19411-IM	Youngsville Television Corporation	NWPA Regional Broadband Deployment Initiative	N/A
PW-19433-TA	Carr Creek Alumni Association	The Magic of Carr Creek: A Community Revitalization Project	Y
PW-19457-TA	Lawrence County, Tennessee	Lawrence County Broadband Feasibility Study	Y
PW-19458-TA	Vinton County Commissioners	Broadband Infrastructure Improvement - Vinton & Meigs County	Y
PW-19459-TA	Lewis County Fiscal Court	Lewis County Broadband Strategic Plan and Feasibility Study	Y
PW-19460-TA	North Carolina Department of Information Technology	Broadband Feasibility Study for Telehealth Deployment in Western North Carolina	N/A
PW-19464-IM	Morgantown Sober Living Inc.	Reintegrate Appalachia: Job Creation and Workforce Development for West Virginians Impacted by Substance Use Disorders	Y

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
PW-19465-IM	Appalachian Investors Alliance	Appalachian Investors Alliance (AIA) - Angel Investing in Coal Communities	N*
PW-19467-IM	Grow Ohio Valley, Inc	Agribusiness Development in the Upper Ohio Valley	N/A
PW-19468-IM	Eastern Kentucky University	Kentucky's Appalachia Aviation Maintenance Technician Training Project"	Y
PW-19471-IM	Appalachian Sustainable Development	Seed-to-Sale: Strengthening the Central Appalachian Food Corridor	N/A
PW-19472-IM	WestCare Kentucky, Inc.	WestCare Kentucky/Judi Patton Center for Families	Y
PW-19473-IM	Duck River Electric Membership Corporation	Duck River EMC''s East Loop Fiber Optic and Smart Grid Project	N/A
PW-19476-TA	Center for Rural Health Development	Creating a More Vibrant Economy for Coal-Impacted Counties in West Virginia	N*
PW-19477-TA	Marshall University Research Corporation	Craft Beer and Spirit Trail	Y
PW-19478-TA	The Industrial Commons	Planning for a Textile and Furniture Circular Economy	Y
PW-19480-TA	North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission	Regional Freight & Mobility Plan for Coal Impacted Communities in North Central PA	Y
PW-19481-TA	New River Gorge Trail Alliance	Linking Trails and Communities to Spawn Economic Growth and Wellness: Expanding the Southern West Virginia Bike Trail Network	Y
PW-19483-IM	Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (C.E.P.), Inc.	Eastern Kentucky Addiction Recovery & Training (eKART)	N/A
PW-19672-TA	Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc.	Washington Electric Cooperative Broadband Feasibility Study	Y
PW-19673-TA	Rockwood Electric Utility	Rockwood Electric Utility Smart Grid Technology Plan	Y
PW-19679-IM	TOMBIGBEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC	Northwest Alabama Revitalization	N*
PW-19686-IM	WV Regional Technology Park Corp	Broadband Infrastructure to Augment Educational and Industry Cluster Development at the West Virginia Regional Technology Park	Y
PW-19687-TA	Trumbull County Planning Commission	Trumbull County Broadband Feasibility Study	N*
PW-19688-TA	Greene County Board of Commissioners	Greene County Rural Broadband Coverage and Feasibility Study	N/A
PW-19689-TA	Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission (SAPDC)	South-Central Pennsylvania Broadband Infrastructure Assessment	Y
PW-19696-TA	Isothermal Planning and Development Commission	WNC Works: Recovery to Careers	N/A
PW-19699-TA	Friends of the Cheat, Inc.	Mountaineer Trail Network: Preston County Pilot Trail Plan	Y
PW-19700-TA	Wayne County Economic Development Authority (WCEDA)	Bio Based Manufacturing	N*
PW-19701-TA	tecBRIDGE, LLC	Enhancing Northeastern Pennsylvania's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem	Y
PW-19702-TA	Fay-Penn Economic Development Council	Fayette County Multi-Tenant Spec Building Feasibility Study	N/A
PW-19703-TA	LENOWISCO Planning District Commission	Technology Innovation Analysis for Rural Water Systems	Y

Grant Number	Grantee Name	Project Name	Post-Close?
PW-19704-TA	Partners in Health Network, Inc.	Enhancing the Economic Impact of Rural Hospitals and Health Centers	Y
PW-19705-TA	Mayland Community College	Creation of Pinebridge Development Strategic Plan	N*
PW-19709-IM	Appalachian Community Capital	Opportunity Appalachia	N/A
PW-19717-IM	Washington State Community College	RAMTEC Appalachia	N/A
PW-19726-IM	Eastern Kentucky PRIDE	Restoring Pride in Kentucky's Appalachia-Phase II	N/A
PW-20059-IM	St. Mary's Health Wagon	Southwest Virginia Medication-Assisted Treatment Services	N/A
PW-20089-TA	Northeast Tennessee Regional Foundation for Economic Development, Innovation and Outdoor Recreation, Inc.	Northeast Tennessee Regional Outdoor Development Strategic Plan	N/A
PW-20092-TA	Wheeling National Heritage Area Corporation	Wheeling Heritage Gateway Initiative	N*
PW-20094-TA	Western Maryland Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc	Feasibility Study for Industrial Hemp Processing Industry	N/A
PW-20099-TA	LENOWISCO Planning District Commission	Tri-State Broadband Infrastructure Feasibility Study	N/A
PW-20100-TA	EKY Heritage Foundation Inc.	Tiny House Manufacturing	N/A

Appendix E

ARC Definitions of POWER Outputs and Outcomes[33]

Outputs

Metric Name	Definition
Acreage	The number of acres impacted by an ARC site development or reclamation project, such as the number of acres graded and prepared for development at an emerging industrial park, the number of acres open to future development, or the number of acres remediated in a reclamation project.
Businesses Served	The number of businesses served by an ARC project. For infrastructure projects, this includes either the number of non-residential entities *with access to* new service (e.g., water, sewer, gas line, or telecommunications) or improved service (e.g., improvements in health or safety, compliance with environmental quality, improved water pressure). For business development projects, this includes businesses receiving technical assistance or participating in training, entrepreneurship, export, or other business development and improvement programs.
Communities Served	The number of communities served or impacted by an ARC project, including projects that address planning, civic participation, infrastructure, educational opportunities, and community capacity. For consolidated technical assistance grants, the number of communities served is the number of projects submitted by state ARC program offices.
Data—Megabits per Second (Mbps)	The data transfer capacity of a telecommunications/broadband network, in megabits per second. This includes the data transfer capacity of a new network, or the increase in data transfer capacity of an existing network due to renovation, new equipment, or other improvements. This measure may be expressed in decimals.
Households Served	The number of households served by an ARC infrastructure project. This includes either the number of households *with access to* new service (e.g., water, sewer, gas line, or telecommunications), or improved service (e.g., improvements in health or safety, compliance with environmental quality, improved water pressure).
Linear Feet	The number of linear feet of pipe, wire, cable, trails, etc. to be constructed or installed.
New Visitors – Days	The number of new daytime visitors to a tourism destination times the number of days they visit, within one year of project implementation.
New Visitors – Overnights	The number of new overnight visitors to a tourism destination times the number of their overnight stays, within one year of project implementation.
Organizations Served	The number of organizations served by an ARC project, including hospitals, schools, churches, non-profits, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies (use when number of businesses or households does not apply).

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[33] See www.arc.gov/resource/guide-to-arc-project-performance-measures/

Metric Name	Definition
Participants Served	The number of individual participants served or targeted by an ARC project (use when patients, students, or worker/trainee measures do not apply). This can include the number of attendees at a meeting, workshop, or conference. For example, the number of individuals participating in a planning process; participating in a leadership program; or the number of individuals attending health promotion activities.
Patients Served	The number of unique patients receiving clinical services one or more times as a result of an ARC health project. For equipment projects, report the number of unique patients served by that equipment during the project period and one year after the equipment is deployed. For health projects that do not provide clinical services (such as health promotion activities), use the measure "participants served."
Plans/Reports	The number of plans or reports developed as a result of an ARC project. This could include strategic plans, master plans, concept plans, or plans for infrastructure improvements or new programs, as well as research reports, feasibility studies, etc. This measure is often paired with the outcome "Programs Implemented," since a program or specific activity is often implemented as a result of a planning process.
Square Feet	The number of square feet constructed or improved by an ARC project, such as the square footage of a renovated community center, a newly constructed parking lot, a reconfigured interior space, etc.
Students Served	The number of students served by an ARC education project, measured during the project period, when possible (e.g., the number of students served by a science and technology program in a given semester or year). For projects that are not fully operational during the project period, the measurement time period may be extended up to three years after the project end date. Projects that expand existing programs count only the additional number of students served.
Workers/Trainees Served	The number of worker/trainees served by an ARC training project, measured during the project period when possible. For example, the number of worker/trainees the project will be able to enroll in a new workforce education program. For projects that are not fully operational during the project period, the measurement time period may be extended up to three years after the project end date. Projects that expand existing programs count only the additional number of workers/trainees that the project will be able to serve.

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Outcomes

Metric Name	Definition
Businesses Created	The number of new businesses created as a result of an ARC project. This measure is used for business development projects such as entrepreneurship training, value-added agriculture, access to capital, and business incubation programs (including seed accelerators). This measure should only be used to measure new business creation, not the number of existing businesses recruited or otherwise relocated from other areas. The grant applicant should estimate how many new businesses will be created within three years of the project end date.
Businesses Improved	The number of businesses with a measurable improvement as a result of an ARC project. For new service infrastructure projects, the output (served) is the number of non-residential entities with access to the infrastructure service while the outcome (improved) is the number of non-residential customers that are connected to the infrastructure service. For improved service projects (e.g., improvements in health or safety, compliance with environmental quality, improved water pressure), all non-residential customers served are also considered improved. For business development projects, the grant applicant and ARC project manager must agree on what constitutes "measurable improvement" and a method for measuring the degree of improvement must be provided. For each project this number is always a subset of, or the same as, the "businesses served" output measure.
Communities Improved	The number of communities with a measurable improvement as a result of an ARC project, including projects that address planning, civic participation, infrastructure, educational opportunities, and community capacity. For community capacity projects, this is the number of communities with enhanced capacity. This measure should also be used for consolidated technical assistance grants. The grant applicant and ARC project manager must agree on what constitutes "measurable improvement" and a method for measuring the degree of improvement must be provided. For each project, this number is always a subset of, or the same as, the "communities served" output measure.
Households Improved	The number of households with measurable improvement as a result of an ARC project. For new service infrastructure projects, the output (served) is the number of households with access to the infrastructure service while the outcome (improved) is the number of residential customers that are connected to the infrastructure service. For improved service projects (e.g., improvements in health or safety, compliance with environmental quality, improved water pressure), all residential customers served are also considered improved. For each project, this number is always a subset of, or the same as, the "households served" output measure.
Jobs Created	The number of jobs created (direct hires, excluding construction jobs) as a result of an ARC project, measured during the project period and up to three years after the project end date. Part-time and seasonal jobs should be converted to full-time equivalents and rounded up to whole numbers. Note: for infrastructure projects, employers must provide letters stating their intention to create a specific number of new jobs; for non-infrastructure jobs, grant applicants should estimate the number of jobs that will be created by the organizations expected to benefit from the project.

Metric Name	Definition
Jobs Retained	The number of jobs retained as a result of an ARC project. These are existing jobs that would be lost or relocated if the ARC project were not undertaken. Note: for infrastructure projects, employers must provide letters explicitly stating the number of jobs at risk, due to relocation or loss of competitiveness, without the project. Existing jobs benefitting from an infrastructure upgrade cannot be counted as jobs retained. For non-infrastructure projects, grant applicants should estimate the number of existing jobs that would be at risk, due to relocation or loss of competitiveness, without the ARC-funded project.
Leveraged Private Investment (LPI)	The dollar amount of private-sector financial commitments, outside of project costs that result from an ARC project, measured during the project period and up to three years after the project end date. Note: for infrastructure projects, businesses must provide letters stating their intention to make a specific level of investment if the project is funded; for non-infrastructure projects, grant applicants should estimate the dollar value of investments that will be made by the company or companies that will benefit from the project.
Organizations Improved	The number of organizations with a measurable improvement as a result of an ARC project, including hospitals, schools, churches, non-profits, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies (use when number of businesses or households does not apply). The grant applicant and ARC project manager must agree on what constitutes "measurable improvement" and a method for measuring the degree of improvement must be provided. For each project, this number is always a subset of, or the same as, the "organizations served" output measure.
Participants Improved	The number of participants with a measurable improvement as a result of an ARC project (use when patients, students, or worker/trainee measures do not apply, as with a leadership program or planning process). If outcomes are not achieved or cannot be measured within three years after the project is completed, the number of participants that complete or attend all or a required number of components of the project activity may be substituted. For example, the number of participants that attend at least four out of the five community workshops offered. The grant applicant and ARC project manager must agree on what constitutes "measurable improvement" and a method for measuring the degree of improvement must be provided. For each project, this number is always a subset of, or the same as, the "participants served" output measure.
Patients Improved	The number of unique patients expected to benefit from an ARC health project. Because it is usually assumed that all patients served by a health project receive some benefit from it, the numbers for "patients served" and "patients improved" are usually the same. However, if the grant applicant can perform clinical measurement of health outcomes, the outcome number may be lower than the output number. For example, if 30 obese patients participate in an exercise program and 25 are expected to lower their BMI by a certain percentage, the output could be recorded as 30 patients served and the outcome as 25 patients improved.

Metric Name	Definition
Programs Implemented	The number of new programs, or the number of ongoing activities related to a defined goal, which are implemented as a result of an ARC project. If possible, use with other measures that indicate the results of the project, such as students, workers, participants, etc.
Revenues Increased: Export Sales	The increase in revenue in export sales realized by a business as a result of an ARC project, within three years of the project end date.
Revenues Increased: Non-Export Sales	The increase in revenue in domestic (non-export) sales realized by a business as a result of an ARC project, within three years of the project end date.
Students Improved	The number of students who obtain a job in the field for which they were specifically trained; the number that receive a diploma, certificate, or other career credential; or the number of students who successfully complete a course or unit of study and/or graduate to the next grade or level necessary to continue their education. When outcomes occur after the project period, the number of students improved may be counted up to three years beyond the project end date. For programs where final outcomes are achieved after three or more years, the number of students improved may be counted by an alternative benchmark, such as the number of students completing a skill, grade, or level, or continued enrollment for the project period. For each project, this number is always a subset of, or the same as, the "students served" output measure.
Telecom Sites	The number of new telecom services installed as a result of an ARC project. This diverse measure includes, but is not limited to, new telemedicine sites, new wi-fi hotspots, a new wireless router or computer lab at a high school, new fiber run to an industrial site, a new antenna used to provide broadband service, etc.
Workers/Trainees Improved	The number of workers/trainees with improved skills that enable them to obtain employment or to enhance their current employment. For example, the number of workers or trainees obtaining a new job; getting higher pay or a better position; or receiving a certification, measured during the project period when possible. When outcomes occur after the project period, the number of workers or trainees improved may be counted up to three years beyond the project end date. For programs where outcomes are achieved after three or more years, the number of students improved may be counted by an alternative benchmark, such as completion of a skill, level/course, or continued enrollment for the project period. For each project, this number is always a subset of, or the same as, the "workers/trainees served" output measure.

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