



Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies (ARISE) Notice of Solicitation of Applications – Full Application Checklist

This checklist aims to serve as a preview of what could be required if you are invited to submit a full ARISE grant application. If you are invited to apply, the instructions in that invitation supersede the information in this preview.

Please be aware that an invitation to submit a full application is **mandatory** in order for ARC to consider an ARISE grant application. ARC will not accept applications from applicants that have not been invited to submit a grant application.

To be considered for an invitation to apply for ARISE funding, applicants must first submit a [project summary](#) to the state program managers of all the states impacted by the proposed project and then a [pre-application](#) to ARISE@arc.gov. **Please read the entire [ARISE notice of solicitation of applications \(NOSA\)](#) for more information on the application process.**

A complete application must be submitted as one PDF file of no more than 120 pages total - 20 pages maximum for the Application Narrative and 100 pages maximum for all attachments.

Acronyms:

IMP = Applies to implementation applications

PLN = Applies to planning applications.

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Application Checklist

- **Table of Contents** (IMP and PLN)
- **Cover Page & Executive Summary** (IMP and PLN)
 - The cover page is a one-page (maximum) list of applicant information such as UEI number, primary contact information, etc.
 - The executive summary is a two-page (maximum) summary of the proposed project.
 - **Note:** Your table of contents, cover page and executive summary are not counted towards your total page count.
- **Application Narrative** (IMP and PLN)
 - Application Narratives are a maximum of 20-pages in length and contain the following sub-components.
 - Statement of Need or Opportunity
 - Project Description
 - Project Team
 - Project Outputs and Outcomes
 - Match and Budget Evaluation
 - Feasibility
 - Sustainability (IMP only)
 - See [Appendix 1: Planning Application Narrative Questions](#) and [Appendix 2: Implementation Application Narrative Questions \(non-construction and construction\)](#) for a complete list of prompts to respond to for each sub-component. **Please note:** These questions are subject to change. If you are invited to apply, you will be asked to respond to the specific prompts in your invitation to apply.
- **Budget Narrative** (IMP and PLN)
 - Use ARC's [budget narrative template](#).
- **Workplan** (IMP and PLN)
 - Workplan should identify planned activities, timelines, and responsible parties for the activities described.
 - Use ARC's [workplan template](#).
- **Federal standard forms** (IMP and PLN)
 - Federal SF-424 (all applications)
 - Federal SF-424A (PLN and IMP, non-construction)
 - Federal SF-424B (PLN and IMP, non-construction)
 - Federal SF-424C (PLN and IMP, construction)
 - Federal SF-424D (PLN and IMP, construction)
 - All [forms and addition instructions](#) are available on ARC's website.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for ARC Projects** (IMP and PLN)
 - Use ARC's [MoU template](#).
- **Letters of engagement** (PLN projects ONLY. IMP projects are required to submit MoUs - more information below)
 - Provide letters of engagement from partner organizations that commit to undertaking specific activities in support of this project.
- **Letters of support** (IMP and PLN)

- Provide letters of demand from businesses and/or other community stakeholders that attest to the need and impact of the proposed project. Do not submit form letters with identical language.
- **Match commitment letters** (IMP and PLN)
 - Identify each non-ARC funding source as federal, state, local or private. Include a letter of commitment from each funding source that specifies the amount of funds committed and the kind of funds committed (grant, loan, cash, in-kind, etc.).
 - If any match was secured prior to the submission of the ARISE application, identify when that funding was committed and detail if/how any of that match has been utilized.
 - Provide descriptions of in-kind resources, including the methods used to determine their value.
 - Your match must be confirmed by May 15, 2026.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Project Partners** (IMP projects ONLY)
 - MoU between project partners must be signed by all parties and at minimum include the following information:
 - Partner's names
 - Partnership roles and responsibilities
 - Expected contribution and funding allocations
 - Communication expectations
 - Agreed-upon outcomes of project
- **Basic Agency Letter Committing to Administer ARC Funds** (IMP projects with construction components ONLY)
 - Address the letter to the Executive Director of the Appalachian Regional Commission.
 - The letter must state:
 - The basic agency's willingness to administer the project if approved by ARC;
 - The ARC grant amount; the total matching funds amount; the total project cost; and the name and email of the primary basic agency contact person(s) for project management and financial management of the grant.
 - For projects that will be administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program or CDBG Entitlement program, the HUD certification form is the basic agency commitment letter.
 - See ARC's Basic Agency Partners for full list of registered basic agencies.
- **Engineering or Architectural Budget** (IMP projects with construction components ONLY)
 - Provide an engineering or architectural budget detailing line-item project costs and the date the budget was developed. The project total from the engineering or architectural budget should match the total on Standard Form 424. (Note that for construction projects only, ARC does not require a breakdown of expenditures by funding source).
 - Include a line item for administrative costs in the budget. This amount should cover the costs of providing project administration tasks including environmental review, Davis-Bacon Act compliance, procurement management, etc.
 - Administration costs associated with the lead organization should not be combined with Basic Agency administration costs. Basic Agency administrative fees (e.g. environmental reviews, Davis Bacon costs) are handled independently between ARC and the Basic Agency and should not be included in the project budget.
 - If the ARC project is part of a larger, multi-phase project, provide only the detailed budget information that corresponds to the total budget for the ARC and matching funds. Example: a proposed ARC project includes \$500,000 of ARC funds and \$1.5

million of matching funds. This \$2 million project is part of a \$10 million multi-phase project. Applicants will provide detailed budget information only for the scope of the \$2 million ARC project and will describe the rest of the larger \$10 million project in the Project Narrative section.

- If the budget includes acquisition (or donation) of land or buildings as a project activity or as match source, provide a MAI appraisal or comparable appraisal.
- **Note:** Most Basic Agencies require a Preliminary Engineers Report (PER) in addition to or in lieu of an engineering or architectural budget. They may require the submission of a PER prior to committing to serve as your Basic Agency. If you are not sure what your Basic Agency requires, please reach out to them in advance to ensure you meet their requirements.

Appendix 1: Planning Application Narrative Questions

- Statement of Need or Opportunity
 - Describe the need or opportunity this project seeks to address, explore and identify the states involved in the multistate proposal. Discuss needs and/or opportunities as they relate to the project's specific target geographies and cite data. ARC has a vast Research and Data Library that we welcome you to use and cite in this section.
 - Explain how this project fits with existing initiatives if applicable and is not duplicative of ongoing efforts in the project area.
 - Explain why this project should be multi-state.
 - Explain why a planning grant is needed.
- Project Description
 - Describe what you will do to meet the need or opportunity presented in your statement of need.
 - Clearly describe how the proposed project will contribute to advancing the regional economy.
 - Describe the proposed scope of work and intended results. ARC should understand all project goals and major activities required to achieve those goals.
 - As an attachment, to detail your proposed scope of work, you will submit a workplan that includes the project goals, milestones, timeline, deliverables and responsible parties. See the template above for details.
 - Identify the proposed geographic areas of focus and rationale for selecting those geographies.
 - Explain how the proposed scope of work and the project's goals align with one or more of the [ARC Strategic Investment Goals](#) and [State Priorities](#).
- Project Team
 - Describe how the project team will work together to execute the activities described in the project description.
 - Identify all partners in the proposed project and project design. Partners may include, but are not limited to, community-based groups, organized labor, not-for-profit institutions of higher education, economic development organizations, for-profit entities, local, regional, and state quasi-governmental entities, or Indian Tribes.
 - Identify each partner's role, responsibilities, contribution (which may include match), and benefits (which may include sub-grants) in the proposed project and project design.
 - Explain why these partners are best suited to work on this project.
 - Explain how these partners will collaborate across state lines.
 - Identify the location of each partner within each state of the proposed service area.
 - If applicable, explain if there are organizations with an indirect role in this project (example, a local non-profit that supports this project but is not directly contributing to its implementation).
 - Reminder: Include Letters of Engagement from partner organizations in your full application. Also, provide Letters of Support from businesses and/or other community stakeholders that attest to the impact of the proposed project.
- Project Outputs and Outcomes
 - List your proposed outputs and/or outcomes for this project. Use the [Guide to ARC Project Performance Measures](#) as you create your performance metrics.
 - Demonstrate how pursuing the outlined scope of work will prepare you for future implementation. Include a discussion of how the resulting plan will lead to quantifiable, measurable outcomes to guide an implementation project, and where and how the

- potential funding could be found beyond the ARC ARISE Initiative.
- Include a description of how project collaborators envision the proposed project transforming and furthering the long-term community and economic development of the project region.
- Outcomes and outputs for planning grants should be achievable by the end of the project period. Applicants are not required to include anticipated outputs/outcomes for an implementation phase of the project.
- Match and Budget Evaluation
 - Identify regional resources to be leveraged as match and the status of that match (**Note:** All match is expected to be confirmed by May 15, 2026). Applicants should demonstrate community and regional commitment to the proposed project by combining ARC resources with a diverse array of match types (cash, in-kind, loans, etc.) and sources (public, private and philanthropic, etc.).
 - For all in-kind resources, please provide descriptions of all in-kind resources, including the methods used to determine their value.
 - Details about matching or cost sharing requirements for ARC grants is available at <https://www.arc.gov/match-requirements-for-arc-grants/>.
 - Reminder: Please submit all relevant standard forms (S-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B) and a budget narrative that follows the template provided.
 - Reminder: Please submit match commitment letters that specify the amount of funds committed and the kind of funds committed (grant, loan, cash, in-kind, etc.). with your full application.
- Feasibility
 - Demonstrate the ability for the project team to undertake/accomplish the proposed scope of work including, but not limited to, the project teams' qualifications (upload résumés, sample request for qualifications, etc. as attachments) and experience managing federal awards.
- Other
 - It is possible that, during the pre-application review process, ARC will have additional, specific questions for you to address in your full application. If this applies to your project, ARC will share those questions with your invitation to apply. If noted in your invitation, please address questions or considerations that came up during the review of your pre-application here.

Appendix 2: Implementation Application Narrative Questions (non-construction and construction)

- Statement of Need or Opportunity
 - Describe the need or opportunity this project seeks to address and identify the states involved in the multi-state proposal. The description should include, to the extent possible, references to government, academic, or expert publications discussing the need or opportunity; or a concise description of the assumption that supports the proposed solution to the need or the area of opportunity. Be specific to the needs and/or opportunities as they relate to the project's specific target geographies and cite data wherever possible. ARC has a vast [Research and Data Library](#) that we welcome you to use and cite in this section.
 - Explain how this project fits with existing initiatives, if applicable, and is not duplicative of ongoing efforts in the project area. Discuss why this project should be multistate. What can project partners working across state lines achieve together that they could not achieve alone.
- Project Description
 - Describe what you will do to meet the need or opportunity presented in the statement of need.
 - Clearly describe how the proposed project significantly advances the regional economy and will create benefits for all states involved.
 - Describe the proposed scope of work and intended results. ARC should understand all project goals and major activities required to achieve those goals.
 - As an attachment, to detail your proposed scope of work, you will submit a workplan that includes the project goals, milestones, timeline, deliverables and responsible parties. See the template above for details.
 - Identify the proposed project area, highlighting geographic areas of focus, including counties in the proposed project's service area.
 - Explain how the proposed scope of work and the project's goals align with one or more of the [ARC Strategic Investment Goals](#) and [State Priorities](#).
 - Describe prior planning efforts that support the need and rationale for this project.
- Project Team
 - Describe how the project team will work together to execute the activities described in the project description.
 - Identify all partners in the proposed project and project design. Partners may include, but are not limited to, community-based groups, organized labor, not-for-profit institutions of higher education, economic development organizations, for-profit entities, local, regional, and state quasi-governmental entities, or Indian Tribes.
 - Identify each partner's role, responsibilities, contribution (which may include match), and benefits (which may include sub-grants) in the proposed project and project design.
 - Explain why these partners are best suited to work on this project.
 - Explain how these partners will collaborate across state lines.
 - Identify location of each partner within each state of the proposed service area.
 - If applicable, explain if there are organizations with an indirect role in this project (example, a local non-profit that supports this project but is not directly contributing to its implementation).
 - Reminder: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is required as proof of partnership collaboration.
 - MOU shall identify project partners in the proposed project and each partners' role, responsibilities, contribution, and benefits in the proposed project.
 - Reminder: please also include Letters of Engagement from partner organizations in your full application. Also, provide Letters of Support from businesses and/or other community

stakeholders that attest to the impact of the proposed project.

- Project Outputs and Outcomes
 - Identify the proposed project outputs and outcomes that are aligned with the scope of work. Use the [Guide to ARC Project Performance Measures](#) as you create your performance metrics. Reviewers will assess whether they appear relevant, realistic, and achievable. Reviewers will also gauge the potential return on investment based on the correlation between the amount of funding requested, the overall scope of work, and the stated outputs and outcomes.
 - Methodology: Explain the methodology and reasoning used to determine the estimated outputs and outcomes, and split into short, medium, and long-term results. Include data collection, tracking, and verification of what role each partner will play in the reporting. Include a description of how project collaborators envision the proposed project transforming and furthering the long-term community and economic development of the project region.
- Match and Budget Evaluation
 - Identify regional resources to be leveraged as match **and** the status of that match (Note: All match is expected to be confirmed by May 15, 2026). Applicants should demonstrate community and regional commitment to the proposed project by combining ARC resources with a diverse array of match types (cash, in-kind, loans, etc.) and sources (public, private and philanthropic, etc.). Additionally, if real property is being utilized as match, please attach a MAI (Member, Appraisal Institute) appraisal of the property's value.
 - Details about matching or cost-sharing requirements for ARC grants are available at <https://www.arc.gov/match-requirements-for-arc-grants/>.
 - Reminder: Please submit match commitment letters that specify the amount of funds committed and the kind of funds committed (grant, loan, cash, in-kind, etc.) with your full application.
 - Reminder: Please submit all relevant standard forms (SF-424 and SF-424 A & B (if non-construction) or SF 424 C & D (if construction)) and a budget narrative that follows the template provided. All items included in the budget and budget narrative must align with each other. All items included in the budget and budget narrative including personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, construction, other and indirect charges must align with the project as described. All items in the budget narrative are detailed and reflected in the budget.
- Feasibility
 - Describe prior planning efforts that support the project's design. Describe what planning or other ground work has already been done to maximize the project's success, any steps taken that will enable you to begin work on the project now, and explain, if there are any gaps in your planning, how those will be addressed through this project.
 - Describe the readiness of the project team to begin work once a grant is awarded. Highlight whether significant hiring is required and what additional expertise is needed for implementation of the proposed scope of work.
 - Demonstrate the ability for the project team to undertake/accomplish the proposed scope of work including, but not limited to, the project teams' qualifications (upload résumés, sample request for qualifications, etc.) and experience managing federal awards.
- Financial Sustainability
 - Describe the plan for the project's operation and sustainability after the grant funding expires and the project is completed. Include a plan and timeline of efforts to secure other sources of support for future operations. Sustainability in this context means the

ability for this project to continue after ARC funding comes to an end.

- Indicate whether your project encompasses other factors that would make it financially sustainable, e.g., the project will generate revenue.

➤ Other

- It is possible that, during the pre-application review process, ARC will have additional, specific questions for you to address in your full application. If this applies to your project, ARC will share those questions with your invitation to apply. If noted in your invitation, please address questions or considerations that came up during the review of your pre-application here.
- For tourism-related construction projects only:
 - Explain how the project meets the “Policy for Development of the Travel and Tourism Industry” in ARC’s Project Guidelines. Include economic impact or feasibility studies as required. For additional guidance on documentation requirements for travel and tourism projects, see [Guidance on Documentation Required by the ARC Policy on Travel and Tourism for Construction Projects](#).