



ARC Awards \$17 Million to Multi-state Workforce and Tourism Development Projects

April 4, 2024

Two new ARISE grants promote multi-state solutions to outdoor recreation tourism and behavioral healthcare challenges across Appalachian Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 4, 2024—Today the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded two new grants totaling \$17 million to boost outdoor recreation tourism and strengthen the behavioral healthcare workforce through its [Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies \(ARISE\)](#) funding opportunity, which drives large-scale economic transformation through multi-state collaboration:

- **[\\$9.3 million ARISE grant to The Appalachian Wildlife Foundation and the Cumberland Trails Conference:](#)** Impacting 12 counties across Appalachian Kentucky and Tennessee, this trail improvement project will develop a wastewater treatment plant and other necessary site preparation infrastructure for Boone’s Ridge, a new outdoor recreation and education destination located on former mine land near the Cumberland Gap National Park. The project also supports the completion and maintenance of the Cumberland Trail by the Cumberland Trails Conference. This project supports communities that are part of the [Rural Partners Network](#), an all-of-government program that connects rural communities with resources and funding to create jobs, build infrastructure, and support long-term economic mobility.
- **[\\$7.7 million ARISE grant to Community Education Group:](#)** Impacting 56 counties across Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia, this project will train and place new community health workers to strengthen the region’s behavioral healthcare systems, while creating new business and economic development partnerships. This project expands on the Community Education Group’s successful community health worker training program, which trains individuals with lived experience in substance use disorder recovery to become community health workers.

“In order to create true, large-scale, transformational change in our region, Appalachians must be willing to work together,” said **ARC Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin**. “The collaboration fostered between the states receiving this round of ARISE funding not only impacts two of

Appalachia's major economic drivers, outdoor recreation and healthcare, but sets a precedent for the ways our economy can be positively impacted when Appalachians work across the state lines and think of all Appalachians as our neighbors."

"Appalachian states are blessed with natural beauty and rich resources, and investments like these are critical to expanding tourism and outdoor experiences that will be enjoyed for generations to come," said **ARC States' Co-Chair Tennessee Governor Bill Lee**. "I thank ARC for encouraging multi-state projects that drive community investment and economic development."

Since August 2022, ARC has used funding provided through the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) to invest \$67.3 million in multi-state ARISE projects that will strengthen Appalachian business and industry, as well as support the development of new economic opportunities across the region.

"By investing in community revitalization, workforce training, and local healthcare, these ARISE grants deliver on President Biden's commitment under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to invest in all of America, especially rural communities that are too often left behind," said **Lael Brainard, National Economic Advisor to President Biden**.

ARC is accepting ARISE concept papers on an ongoing basis. The next deadline for concept paper submissions is April 30, 2024.

Learn more about ARISE: www.arc.gov/ARISE.

About the Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission is an economic development entity of the federal government and 13 state governments focusing on 423 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC's mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia to help the region achieve socioeconomic parity with the nation.



Biden-Harris Administration through ARC Awards \$20M to Accelerate Green Textile Manufacturing, Green Energy Technology in Southern and Central Appalachia

October 11, 2023

Funding will help revitalize the textile manufacturing industry and remove barriers to deploying smart grid technologies across six Appalachian states.

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 11, 2023—Today, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded \$20 million for two new projects that will bolster green “upcycling” textile manufacturing and smart grid technologies across Appalachian North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. The projects are supported through ARC’s [Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies \(ARISE\)](#) funding opportunity, which drives large-scale economic transformation through multi-state collaboration:

- **A \$10 million ARISE grant to [The Industrial Commons](#) of Morganton, NC** will construct a 40,000 square-foot upcycling textile manufacturing hub, create over 80 new jobs and retain another 530, train hundreds of students and workers about advanced manufacturing, establish a textile supply chain, and connect entrepreneurs in Appalachian North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Through its workforce and education training approach, the project will prepare the next generation of workers to grow the upcycling textile industry in Southern Appalachia.
- **A \$10 million ARISE grant to [Tennessee Technological University](#) in Cookeville, TN** will help rural electric utilities and energy startups deploy smart grid technologies by providing grid modeling support across Appalachian Tennessee, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Providing grid modeling support will help remove barriers to deploying green, smart grid technologies such as electronic vehicle (EV) charging stations, wind farms, solar photovoltaic arrays, and battery storage. This work is also expected to benefit the expansion of battery manufacturing in Appalachia to fuel economic growth.



Biden-Harris Administration through ARC Awards \$14.5M+ to Grow Green Manufacturing in Northern and Central Appalachia

October 10, 2023

Two new ARISE grants strengthen green manufacturing and clean energy production and prepare youth for in-demand jobs across five states.

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 10, 2023—Today, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded two new grants totaling over \$14.5 million to boost green energy manufacturing and workforce development through its Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies (ARISE) funding opportunity, which drives large-scale economic transformation through multi-state collaboration:

- A **\$10 million ARISE grant to [Catalyst Connection](#) of Pittsburgh, PA** will help 1,000+ small to medium manufacturers expand or enter green technology and clean energy sectors in 156 counties across Appalachian Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York, Ohio, and West Virginia. Funds will be used to provide training, technical assistance, supply chain mapping, and guidance on factory upgrades to support manufacturers of renewable energy, hydrogen power, low-carbon and decarbonized power, smart grid improvements, electric vehicles, and green buildings.
- A **\$4.5+ million ARISE grant to [Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission](#) of Towanda, PA** will prepare and train an estimated 3,400+ students and young adults in Pennsylvania and New York for jobs in emerging industries. The project aims to engage employers with youth education providers to increase labor participation in Northern Appalachia.



ARC Awards \$5.2+ Million to Create Workforce and Business Opportunities Across Seven Appalachian States

June 29, 2023

Two new [ARISE](#) grants will help prepare youth in West Virginia and Mississippi for careers in healthcare and manufacturing, and develop a plan to grow forest farming businesses across Central Appalachia.

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 29, 2023—Today, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded two new grants totaling over \$5.2 million through its new [Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies \(ARISE\)](#) funding opportunity, which drives large-scale economic transformation through multi-state collaboration:

- **A \$4.7 million ARISE grant to [Education Alliance](#) will support a new project to mentor, train and prepare underserved high school students in West Virginia and Mississippi for careers in manufacturing and healthcare.** In partnership with [Toyota](#) in West Virginia and Mississippi, [West Virginia Jefferson Medical Center](#), [J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital/Children's Hospital](#), and five county schools, the Education Alliance's ARISE project seeks to transform the region's workforce ecosystem to meet industry workforce needs and increase access to career exploration and training for underserved high school students and their families in Appalachia.
- **A \$490,647 ARISE grant to [Virginia Tech](#) will support a planning project seeking to grow forest farming business ventures and the Non-Timber Forest Products supply chain across Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, and West Virginia.** Virginia Tech is collaborating with 11 organizations across six states to develop the plan.

"I strongly believe that the key to transforming Appalachia's economic vitality can be found in vision and collaboration across state lines," said **ARC Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin**. "I'm encouraged by the way our newest ARISE grantees have come together to forge plans that will greatly increase workforce development and business ventures in ways that will positively affect the entire region."

"President Biden's Investing in America agenda is focused on building our economy from the bottom up and middle out, and today's investments from the Appalachian Regional Commission will help drive economic development in the region for years to come," said **Senior Advisor to**

the President and White House Infrastructure Coordinator Mitch Landrieu. “These investments will support businesses, create good-paying jobs to meet industry workforce needs, and help hard-working Americans in underserved communities access new opportunities. It takes strong partnership at all levels of government and with the private sector and leaders in education to deliver for the people of Appalachia, and today’s announcement is a great example of what we can accomplish when we work together.”

“The new ARISE initiative is bringing together states across our region to drive innovation and progress,” said **ARC 2023 States’ Co-Chair, Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear.** “In Kentucky, we believe in being good neighbors to one another. This program shows that being a good neighbor can also mean working across state lines. We know that when all of Appalachia succeeds, Kentucky succeeds as well.”

The projects are funded through [ARISE](#), ARC’s new initiative to drive large-scale, regional economic transformation through multi-state collaborative projects across Appalachia. Making available \$73.5 million provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also known as the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021](#), ARC launched ARISE in August of 2022 to strengthen Appalachian business and industry, and to grow and support the development of new economic opportunities across multiple states.

Earlier this year, ARC announced its first ARISE grant to Connect Humanity for [a project](#) that is helping 50 underserved communities in every subregion of Appalachia plan for broadband access and growth. ARC will announce additional ARISE grants in the coming months. Learn more about ARISE and the recent updates to the application process: www.arc.gov/ARISE.

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ARC Awards \$6.3 Million to Bolster Broadband Access Across 50 Communities in Every Appalachian Subregion

January 11, 2023

The first-ever grant funded through ARC's new Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies (ARISE), led by Connect Humanity, will provide support to under-connected communities throughout Appalachia, better positioning them to grow broadband economic opportunities.

WASHINGTON, D.C., January 11, 2023—Today, ARC awarded \$6.3 million through its new [Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies \(ARISE\)](#) funding opportunity to [Connect Humanity](#) for a project that will help 50 underserved communities in [every subregion](#) of Appalachia plan for broadband access and growth.

Working with local partners in 12 Appalachian states—Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia—Connect Humanity will help communities develop tailored digital equity plans designed to deliver appropriate technology, business, and financing plans necessary to ensure high-speed and affordable internet for all, device access, and digital literacy training. The growing list of project partners include:

- [Center on Rural Innovation](#)
- [Empire State Development](#)
- [Enterprise Center](#)
- [Fair Count](#)
- [Generation WV](#)
- [Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits & Philanthropy](#)
- [NC State University Institute for Emerging Issues](#)
- [SOAR – Shaping Our Appalachian Region](#)
- [Student Freedom Initiative](#)
- [Center for Strategic Partnerships at the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development](#)
- [Virginia Funders Network](#)

While a central focus of the project will be to help 50 under-connected communities across Appalachia compete for some of the \$45 billion from the [Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment \(BEAD\)](#) and [Digital Equity Act \(DEA\)](#) funding that will become available later in 2023, communities will also benefit from the technical assistance provided as part of the project to put them on a path to digital equity.

“ARC’s first ARISE grant to Connect Humanity has tremendous potential to drive large-scale, regional transformation around broadband access,” said **ARC Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin**. “Broadband access is essential for Appalachia to thrive and compete in a global economy; without this support, our most rural communities may be left further behind. I commend our states and community partners in every Appalachian subregion for coming together in order to fully participate in our digitalized world.”

“President Biden’s Bipartisan infrastructure Law is making sure we don’t leave any community behind as we grow the economy from the bottom up and middle out, especially Appalachia,” said **Mitch Landrieu, Senior Advisor to the President and White House Infrastructure Coordinator**. “Under the leadership of Co-Chair Gayle Manchin, ARC is providing critical resources to make sure states are prepared to help connect all of their residents to affordable, reliable high-speed internet.”

“Access to affordable, high-speed internet is something every family across Appalachia needs and deserves. This project is another important step to ensuring broadband reaches every American,” said **ARC States’ Co-Chair Governor Andy Beshear of Kentucky**.

“With the U.S. government about to make its biggest ever investment to close the digital divide, it’s critical that the communities that most need support to build better broadband can secure these funds,” said **Connect Humanity Program Lead Chris Worman**, who added, “This program will put 50 communities in Appalachia on the path to getting fast, reliable, affordable internet, serving hundreds of thousands of families and businesses with the connectivity they need to thrive in an increasingly digital world.”

Appalachian communities can learn more and apply at connecthumanity.fund/arise.

ARC’s ARISE Funding Opportunity

[ARISE](#) is ARC’s newest initiative to drive large-scale, regional economic transformation through multi-state collaborative projects across Appalachia. Making available \$73.5 million in FY 2022 provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also known as the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021](#), ARC launched ARISE in August of 2022 to strengthen Appalachian business and industry, and to grow and support the development of new economic opportunities across multiple states. Learn more: arc.gov/ARISE.

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