

*You have arrived at:*

# West Virginia Community Capacity Building

*Welcome!*  
We will get started soon.



EPA MID-ATLANTIC REGION  
2023 SUMMIT

Engaging and Investing for a  
Healthy and Sustainable Future

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*This session is being recorded and will be made available after the summit.*

# West Virginia Community Capacity Building



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Office of Community Tribes and Environmental Assessment

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Heidi Binko - Just Transition

May 2023

# Investing in Underserved Communities Through Collaboration

- ▶ Presentation will highlight efforts by Environmental Protection Agency, Appalachian Regional Commission and Just Transition to ensure overall benefits of Federal investments flow to underserved communities.
- ▶ We will be discussing assistance our organizations are providing to Coal Communities.
- ▶ These communities are home to former and current employees of coal mines and coal-fired power plants, that suffer from enduring pollution legacy from those operations, as well as negative economic impacts as energy production begins to transition away from coal.

# Investing in Underserved Communities

## Key Federal Executive Orders

- ▶ **Executive Order 12898**  
*Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (2/11/94)*
- ▶ **Executive Order 13985**  
*Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government (1/20/21)*
- ▶ **Executive Order 14008**  
*Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (1/27/21)*
- ▶ **Executive Order 14096**  
*Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All (4/21/23)*

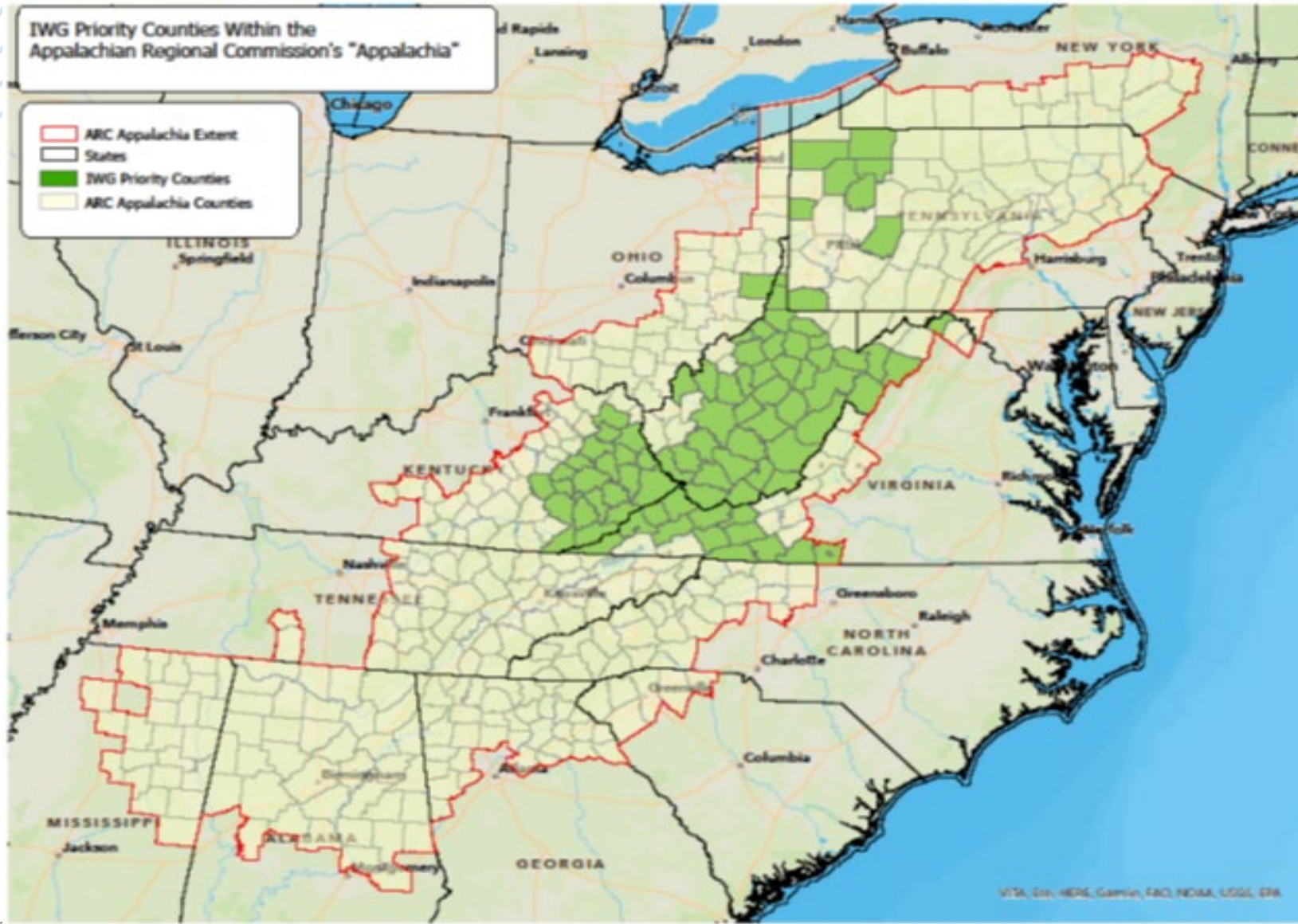
# BACKGROUND

Presentation title

# Investing in Underserved Communities

- ▶ January 2021 - Federal Executive Order 14008, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad” directs Federal departments and agencies to promote the revitalization of “Coal and Power Plant Communities”.
- ▶ The Initial Report to the President on Empowering Workers Through Revitalizing Energy Communities identified 25 geographic areas across the country most impacted by coal related declines. Approximately 87 communities across the Appalachia Region.





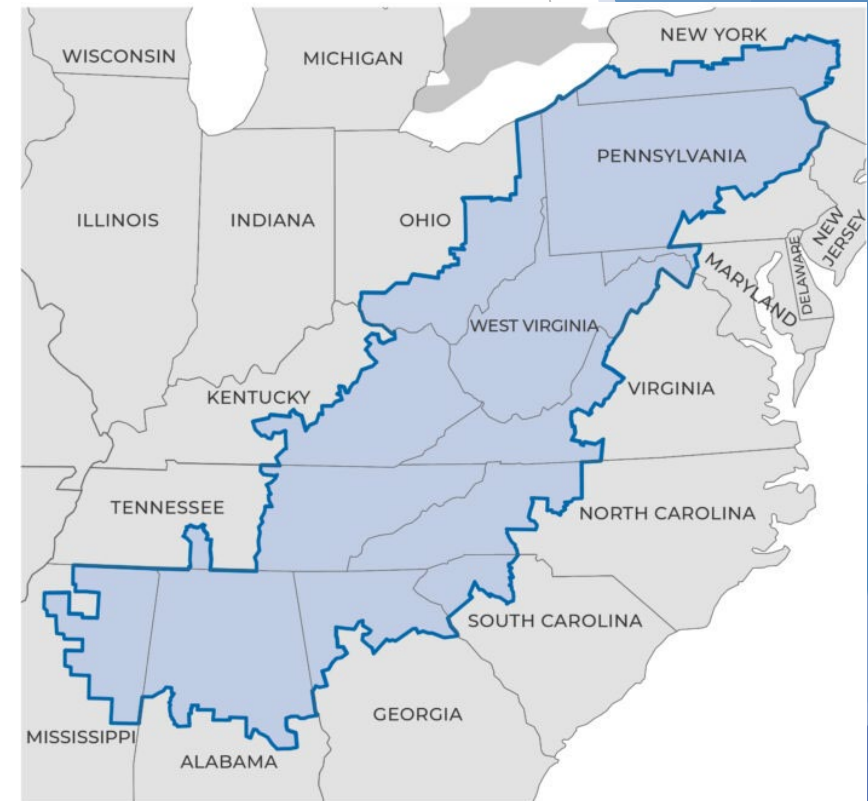


# Investing in Underserved Communities

- ▶ March 2021 – Region 3's Office of Communities Tribes and Environmental Assessment (OCTEA) met with representatives from Regions 4 and 5 to partner on a collaboration with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).
- ▶ August 2021 OCTEA wrote and submitted a proposal for \$500,000 of ARP funding from Office of Environmental Justice. Funding provided to the Tri-regional team to collaborate with ARC in an effort to provide coal communities with information and technical assistance regarding available Federal funding for economic revitalization.
- ▶ September 2021 met with Gail Manchin, Co-Chair ARC to discuss a partnership as well as sharing our ARP Funding.
- ▶ November 2021 – Entered into an Interagency Agreement with ARC. Interagency Agreement provided \$500,000 towards READY Appalachia: A Community Capacity Building Initiative.

# ► Appalachian Regional Commission(ARC)

- Economic development agency
- Partnership of federal government and 13 state governments
- Mission: Strengthen economic growth and community capacity in Appalachia



# GOALS

# Goals of the Overall Collaboration

- ▶ Reinvigorate EPA's relationship with ARC
- ▶ Outreach to Coal Communities in Regions 3, 4, and 5
- ▶ Partner with ARC to implement READY Appalachia: Community Capacity Building Initiative
  - ❖ READY Appalachia is a Community Capacity-Building Initiative providing technical assistance and funding to support four key pillars of economic development in the region: Appalachian local governments, LDDs, nonprofit organizations, and community foundations.

# Goals of the Overall Capacity Building Initiative

- ▶ Identify challenges to economic recovery in coal communities related to capacity
- ▶ Offer a combination of training and grants to better inform Appalachian local governments, LDDs, nonprofit organizations, and community foundations of the availability of funding in support of the revitalization of Appalachian coal and power plant communities.
- ▶ Provide assistance to Appalachian local governments, LDDs, nonprofit organizations, and community foundations apply for and manage federal awards.

# EPA-ARC Capacity Building Initiative Phase I - Community Capacity Building Pilot Program

- ▶ Phase I of the initiative included five two-part virtual trainings and created virtual hub for communities and LDDs to share best practices and gain support from experts to access, leverage and manage funds.
- ▶ Two of the five sessions included best practices presentations by communities that successfully obtained and leveraged funding towards economic recovery.

# Results



# Results of the Capacity Building Efforts

## Results Based on Phase I of the Project:

- More than 600 county, local and district officials from across Appalachia participated, including representation from:
  - ▣ 408 of the 423 counties across Appalachia
  - ▣ 82 of the 87 priority counties identified by the Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization (the IWG)
  - ▣ 67 of 74 Local Development Districts serving the Appalachia Region
- Identification of coal communities challenges

# Challenges to Economic Recovery

Training participants were surveyed and self-identified challenges facing their communities

- ▶ Applying for and managing grant funding
- ▶ Lack of matching funds for many Federal grant opportunities
- ▶ Wastewater Infrastructure
- ▶ Broadband
- ▶ Job Training needs to attract Business
- ▶ Lack of Housing opportunities



# Ready Appalachia: Capacity Building Initiative

# READY

## APPALACHIA

### ► History/Context

- Appalachia Nonprofit Resource Center
- Phase I – Community Capacity Building Pilot Program
- Increased federal funds
- Long-term issues

### ► Target Groups

- Underserved communities (low-income, IWG, historically marginalized populations)
- Low-capacity entities
- Previously unreached individuals and groups



▶ **New Community Capacity Building Initiative**

▶ **Serving:**

- **Nonprofits**
- **Local governments**
- **Community foundations**
- **Local development districts**

▶ **Small-group virtual training and match-free grant funding**

# READY

## NONPROFITS

### READY Non-Profits

- ▶ **Small-group virtual courses:**
- ▶ Board development
- ▶ Fundraising
- ▶ Financial Management
- ▶ Programs/Operations
- ▶ Human Capital
- ▶ Marketing/Communications
- ▶ **10 weeks**
- ▶ **Class, 1:1s, homework, follow-up consultation**



## ► Grants for READY Non-Profit Participants:

- Up to \$25,000, no match required
- Must address their organization's capacity building
- We help nonprofit develop their idea
- Not competitive
- Does not have to relate to their course



► We follow this  
basic program  
model for LDDs,  
Local  
Governments, and  
Community  
Foundations.



# READY Appalachia Capacity Building Initiative Phase II - **READY LDDs**

- ▶ ARC is investing \$4M to provide Appalachian communities with additional technical assistance and funding that would enable them to take full advantage of IIJA and ARPA funds, as well as other federal funding sources. In addition, a portion of the \$500,000 from EPA is being applied to this phase of the project.
- ▶ LDDs can apply for awards of up to \$100,000 to hire staff to work with Appalachian communities write grant proposals, manage funding, and fulfill grant reporting requirements.
- ▶ To date, 39 applications received, ARC reviewing and ranking.

► **Follow ARC and the READY Program:**

► READY Website: <https://www.arc.gov/ready/>

► Sign up for the ARC weekly newsletter:  
<https://www.arc.gov/newsletter-signup/>



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Wheeling, West Virginia, featuring a river, several bridges, and various buildings. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue layer containing text.

JUST  
TRANSITION  
FUND

# FEDERAL ACCESS CENTER

West Virginia Community Capacity Building

*May 17, 2023*



An aerial photograph showing a small town nestled in a valley, surrounded by dense forests and rolling hills. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. A prominent water tower stands out in the town.

# About the Just Transition Fund

We created the Just Transition Fund, a national philanthropic hybrid, to help communities overcome the economic challenges brought about by the decline of the coal industry.

## Experts in the Just Transition Field

- Worked on the ground with coal communities for almost 10 years
- Long track record of helping coal communities access federal funding
- Advocated for the historic federal funding levels we're seeing today, via our National Economic Transition Initiative

## What We Do

### Access

- **Federal Access Center:** Grants and technical assistance to help communities access federal funds

### Advocate

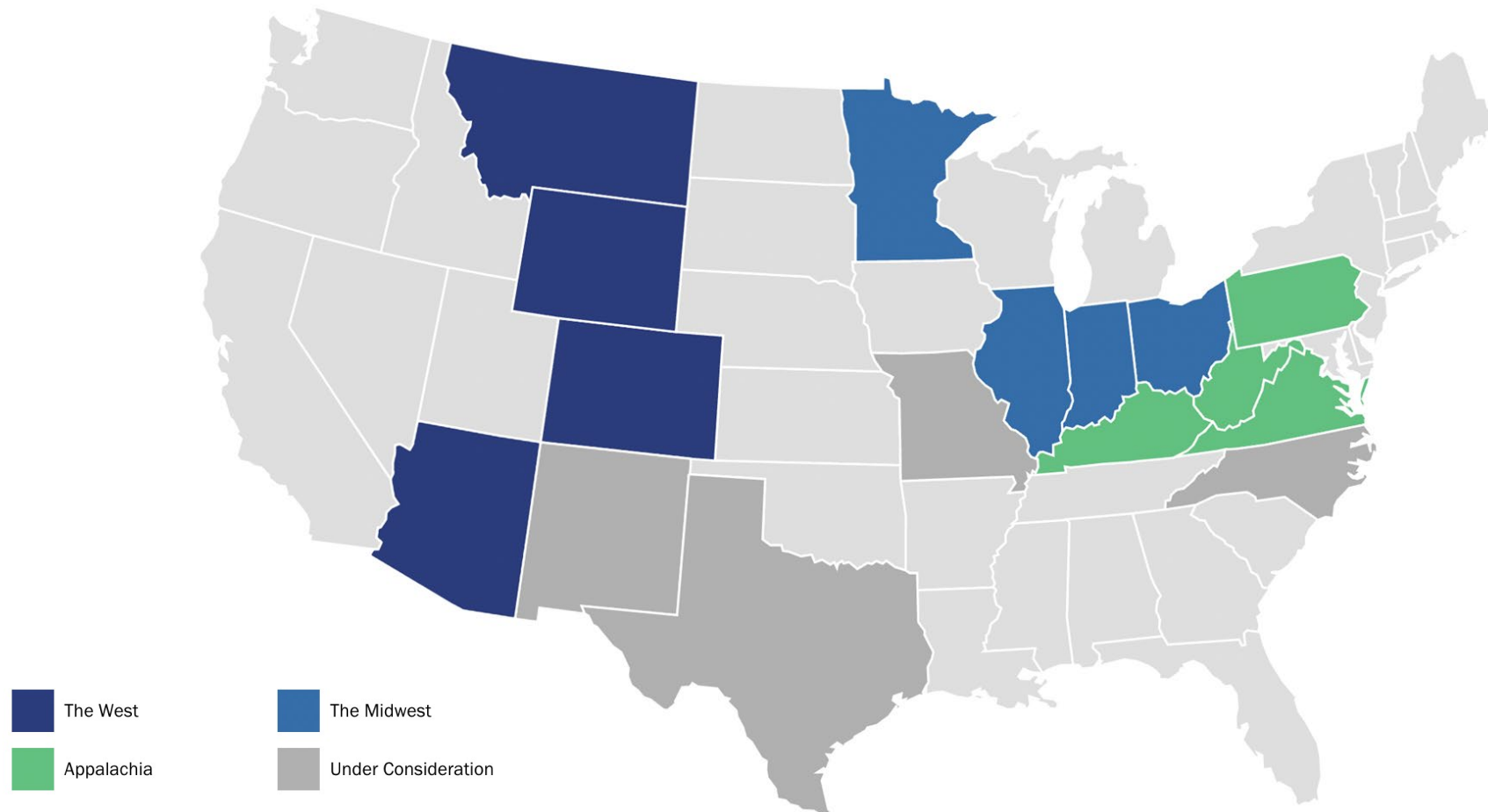
- National Economic Transition Initiative
- State and federal policy grantmaking

### Convene

- Annual convenings and peer-to-peer learning exchanges

# Who We Serve

We have prioritized these states to date, but we are NOT restricting geographic eligibility for the Federal Access Center. **Organizations supporting economic transition in ANY coal affected community, regardless of state are eligible.**





# Community Barriers to Federal Access

The opportunity to leverage federal funding to strengthen local economies has never been greater. But this funding is difficult to access for capacity-constrained organizations and localities. A range of barriers prevent many effective organizations from submitting competitive proposals:

1

**Navigating over 400 programs spread across more than 10 agencies that support rural economic development**

2

**Stringent eligibility and match requirements**

3

**Complex application processes that often require professional grant writers**



# Federal Access Center

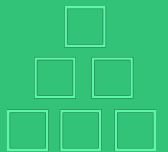
Our Federal Access Center (FAC) is a **one-stop resource hub** that provides both grants and technical assistance to help coal communities secure public funding for local economic solutions. Examples of successful projects we've supported include:



**Community  
Economic  
Development**



**Workforce  
Development**



**Infrastructure  
(Broadband)**

## **Appalachian Climate Technology (ACT) Now Coalition (West Virginia)**

**Secured \$62.8M from the EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge to advance green tech**

JTF provided matching funds and funding for application development

## **Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation (Crow Indian Reservation in Montana)**

**Secured \$1.2M from the HSS Administration for Native Americans to expand HVAC and carpentry workforce program at Little Big Horn College**

JTF provided matching funds

## **Shaping Our Appalachian Region (Kentucky)**

**Secured \$500k from the FCC Affordable Connectivity Outreach Program that will leverage \$11M in subsidies by enrolling eligible families in the ACP Program**

JTF provided matching funds

# Partnerships in IWG Rapid Response Team Regions

## Four Corners Region

- **Tribe Awaken:** CEWD grantee, to support community economic development initiatives in the Navajo Nation
- **Region10:** INF grantee, to expand broadband access in Western CO; projected to secure more than \$20 million in federal funds to help communities increase internet access
- **Colorado Farm and Food Alliance:** CEWD grantee, to connect rural agricultural producers with urban consumers and providing training for agriculture-related entrepreneurs and small businesses

## Wyoming

- **Campbell County Council of Community Services:** FAC grantee, secured \$150k from FCC ACP Outreach Program that will leverage \$486k in subsidies
- **Powder River Basin Resource Council:** Planning grantee, to support coal community transition planning efforts

## Montana

- **Plenty Doors:** CEWD/FAC grantee, to support HVAC and workforce training program with Little Big Horn College
- **Northern Plains Resource Council:** Policy grantee, to ensure coal ash pond cleanup created good quality jobs for Colstrip plant workers

# Our Services

## Application-Ready Support



**Grants of up to \$100,000** to support costs associated with developing federal applications, including grant writers and match.



**Technical assistance** from experts who can review proposals before submission, provide guidance on program requirements, and more.

## Early-Stage Support

*Coal Communities Get Ready! Challenge*



**Grants of up to \$150,000** for early-stage project development, with the long-term goal of accessing federal funds.

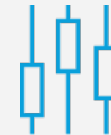


**Deep technical assistance** to help communities get ready to apply for federal funds. Provide specialized technical assistance for CEWD and broadband.

## Informing and Coordinating with Federal Agencies



Share lessons learned back with agencies about barriers for communities applying for federal funds.



Work with IWG and their Rapid Response Teams where there is geographic alignment.

# How Groups Can Receive Application-Ready Support

## Eligibility

- ❑ 501c3 or local government\* located in coal-impacted community
- ❑ Economic development, workforce, or broadband infrastructure project
- ❑ Plan to apply for federal funds in the next 6 months

\*new this year!

## Process

*(Rapid-response, rolling-basis, with ability for us to fast track as needed)*

- 1 Submit Inquiry**  
Fill out 1 minute form with basic project information. Within 2 business days, they get an email to schedule an intro call with Natalie.
- 2 Introductory Call**  
We'll schedule a 30-minute call within a few weeks. On this call, we'll determine eligibility to apply for specific JTF services.
- 3 Submit Application**  
If eligible to apply, we'll send a 1 page application for a grant, technical assistance, or both.
- 4 Receive Decision**  
We'll provide feedback within a few weeks of receiving application.

# How Groups Can Receive Early-Stage Support

## Eligibility

- ❑ 501c3 or local government\* located in coal-impacted community
- ❑ Deeply rooted in coal-affected areas and have demonstrated ability to partner with wide range of transition stakeholders
- ❑ Model projects that are generalizable and replicable
- ❑ Little to no federal grant experience but want to be ready to apply for federal funds in the next year

\*new this year!

## Coal Communities Get Ready! Challenge

### *Timeline and Process*

- 1 Submit Inquiry by May 31, 2023**  
Fill out 1 minute inquiry form with basic information. Within a week, you'll get an email to schedule an intro call with JTF team member.
- 2 Introductory Call**  
We'll schedule a 30-minute intro call within a few weeks. On this call, we'll determine eligibility for the Get Ready! Challenge and answer any questions.
- 3 Submit Application by June 30, 2023**  
We'll invite applications from eligible organizations. Applications are due 3-4 weeks of receiving the invitation and no later than June 30, 2023.
- 4 Cohort Selection in September**  
We will announce 8-10 cohort members in September. Cohort members will be invited and encouraged to attend the JTF Convening in late October.

# Current Federal Program Priorities

## Community Economic and Workforce Development

- DOE | Energy Improvements in Rural and Remote Areas, Energy Infrastructure Reinvestment Program, Clean Energy Demonstration on Mine Lands
- EDA | Recompete Pilot Program, Economic Adjustment, Tech Hubs
- ARC | ARISE, POWER
- USDA | RISE, Agricultural Innovation Centers, REAP, Regional Food System Partnerships, Rural Utilities Service

## Broadband Infrastructure

- BIA | National Tribal Broadband Grant
- FCC | ACP Outreach Program
- NTIA | Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, BEAD and DEA, Middle Mile
- USDA | ReConnect, Community Connect
- ARC | POWER





# Impact to Date

**\$393 Million**

To date, we've helped communities leverage \$393 million in federal funding.

**157x**

We've generated a 157x return on investment!







# Partnership Opportunities

1

## **Network Coordination and Convening**

We have deep connections with community economic development, workforce, and broadband organizations in coal communities nationally that are ready to help and engage. The JTF has the ability to convene and coordinate both within and across regions, providing opportunities for organizations to learn from like-minded peers.

2

## **Direct Grants and Technical Assistance**

Through the FAC, we can provide grants and technical assistance at different stages of the process to help organizations build capacity, pilot projects, and develop applications for federal funds. Groups can fill out our interest form to get started!

3

## **Liaison between Federal Agencies and Communities**

We have relationships with representatives across a wide range of federal agencies and can both help organizations make connections and share program feedback based on local experience with Agency partners.



# Get Started

## Is your organization interested in applying for federal funds?

Fill out our 1 minute interest form to schedule an intro call! We'll put the link in the chat or you can scan this QR code:



[justtransitionfund.org/fac-interest-form](https://justtransitionfund.org/fac-interest-form)

## Do you know organizations who may be interested in applying for federal funds?

If so, please help us spread the word! PDF one-pager available at the link below or you can scan this QR code:



[justtransitionfund.org/fac-outreach](https://justtransitionfund.org/fac-outreach)



# Contact Information

Heidi Binko

*Co-Founder and Executive Director*

[hbinko@justtransitionfund.org](mailto:hbinko@justtransitionfund.org)



*Thanks for attending!*

*Thank You!*

Standby for closing remarks  
from Regional Administrator  
Adam Ortiz.



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## *Closing Remarks*

Adam Ortiz  
EPA Mid-Atlantic  
Administrator



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