

Federal Access Center Application Guidance:
Early Stage Coal Communities Get Ready! Challenge

Short Answer Questions

In addition to basic background information about your organization, you will input responses to the following questions directly into the online form. (These may or may not be applicable to your project so answer any that are relevant.)

Where will your project take place? If your work takes place on Tribal Lands, please also indicate the state(s) the Tribal Lands intersect with.

COLORADO (Routt, Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties)

Please identify the marginalized population(s) your project is primarily designed to benefit.

X Low-income, Hispanic, women

Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, people of color

Women

None of the above

X Other: Rural communities and coal workers impacted by the sunsetting of coal-fired power plants in Colorado

Please identify the industry sector(s) that your project will help to advance.

X Agriculture

X Clean energy

X Tourism

X Knowledge economy & technology

X Construction

X Manufacturing

X Healthcare

Arts & culture

X Other: Child care, transportation

Have you identified which federal program(s) JTF support would help prepare you to apply for? If known, identify the agency, name of the program, the representative you have spoken with, the tentative amount you're applying for, and the tentative amount of funding this project will leverage overall.

Please identify the federally-funded program you will apply for using the following format: [Name of Program] [Federal Agency]*

NWCDC has developed a comprehensive list of priority projects, many of which would be eligible for federal funding. Some of the specific opportunities that we have identified so far include:

Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program, USDA

Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (PWEAA), Economic Development Administration (EDA)

Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program, Department of Transportation (DOT)

Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE), USDA

Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program, EDA for the Town of Rangely

Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (EDA)

Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD), USDA

The Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Land (CEML)

What is the tentative dollar amount you're considering applying for?*

Varies by grant

Have you spoken with a representative from the relevant federal agencies?*

Yes

Who did you speak with and what guidance did you receive?*

We have met with Trent Thompson (EDA Representative for Colorado and Utah) on a number of occasions about various EDA grants, including the EDA Tech Hub. has advised us that PWEAA could be a good fit for some of our individual projects. We have reached out to him to discuss the Recompete grant but have not yet met.

From USDA, we have met with Robert McElroy (Colorado Director of Business and Cooperative Programs), Bill Chester (Loan Assistant), Kisha Westcott (Loan Specialist), Jessica Akers (Loan Specialist), and Duane Dale (Community Programs Director) regarding various USDA grants, including the Community Facilities Grants/Loans, Local Meat Capacity Grants (MCap) and MPPEP grants. We have also introduced them to some of our ranchers and ag producers in the region to discuss potential projects. They have provided helpful guidance on steps we need to take to be competitive and prepared for USDA grants.

We met with Lily Griego (HHS Regional Director) to discuss the various healthcare projects that are in the NWCDC pipeline. She directed us to a variety of resources, including USDA Community Facilities Grants.

We met with Mercedes Maestas HUD Colorado Field Office Director about affordable housing.

We have not yet connected with anyone regarding PACE, SECD or Rural and Tribal Assistance Program but we feel these are promising opportunities.

How much other public sector funding will this project leverage, if applicable? Please include any local funding, state funding, and other federal funding amounts not applied for with JTF support.*

This is a numeric field and I think we should leave it at \$0 since we don't know

How much private sector funding will this project leverage, if applicable?*

This is a numeric field and I think we should leave it at \$0 since we don't know

Please describe the sources of the public and private sector funding this project will leverage, if applicable.

We don't yet have specific information about the amount of public funding that this will leverage, but we plan to apply for a state match from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) through their Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) matching program for any eligible projects. Many of our priority projects also have applications pending with the Colorado Office of Just Transition, which is funding specifically aimed at coal transition communities.

In addition, we have one \$2.3M pending Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) application for one of our healthcare projects that has received initial approval from the Senate and will be moving through appropriations in the coming months and another clean energy project that received a \$5M CDS award last fiscal year. NWCDC was also a partner on the state of Colorado's EDA Tech Hub grant and this application is pending. NWCDC has also applied to host an EDA Economic Recovery Corps Fellow through the Routt County Economic Development Partnership (RCEDP) and is in the final interview stages.

It is difficult to project the specific amount of private sector funding that these projects will leverage at this early stage, but we are actively seeking private investors through fundraising efforts. The development of a regional website will help promote private investments. We feel confident private sector investments will result from these grants. We do know that the MPPEP grant will require a 70% cost share from the facility's owner.

Has your organization previously applied for federal funding? If you have, please briefly describe the grants you've pursued and whether or not your applications were successful.

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Routt County has applied for some federal grants, and some of our NWCDC partners have as well. For example, the City of Craig received an EDA grant, Routt County has received Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), EDA and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) grants for very specific federal pass-through projects, and Rio Blanco has had some success with DOE grants. However, the number of federal grants we have been able to pursue throughout our region has been very limited by staff capacity challenges and barriers to applying for federal funds. We know there are many federal opportunities that could support priority projects in our region, but we have not had adequate capacity to pursue them.

Does the project you are proposing have local leadership and philanthropic support? If this applies to your project, please include the local leadership and/or philanthropic organizations supporting your project, as well as points of contact, if relevant.

Does the project you are proposing have local leadership and philanthropic support?*

This project has local leadership support

This project has philanthropic support

X This project has both local leadership and philanthropic support

Please identify the local leadership organization supporting this project.*

All 10 entities that comprise the NWCDC have formally voted to approve this JTF application and are in support of this project. This includes Routt, Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties; the Cities of Craig and Steamboat; and the Towns of Hayden, Meeker, Oak Creek, Rangely, and Yampa.

Philanthropic partners include the Yampa Valley Community Foundation, South Routt Medical Center Foundation, and Pioneers Medical Foundation.

Please identify a point of contact at the local leadership organization you listed.*

City of Craig: Peter Brixius, (970) 826-2023, pbrixius@ci.craig.co.us

City of Steamboat: Joella West, jwest@steamboatsprings.net

Town of Hayden: Mathew Mendisco, (970) 276-3741,

mathew.mendisco@haydencolorado.org

Town of Meeker: Mandi Etheridge, (970) 878-5344, Mandi@town.meeker.co.us

Town of Oak Creek: David Torgler, (970) 736-2422, david@townofocakcreek.com

Town of Rangely: Lisa Piering, (970) 675-8476, lpiering@rangelyco.gov

Moffat County: Melody Villard, (970) 824-9155 mvillard@moffatcounty.net

Rio Blanco County: Ty Gates, (303) 472-2685 ty.gates@rbc.us

Routt County: Tim Redmond, (970) 879-0108, tim.redmond@co.routt.co.us
Town of Yampa: Sheila Symons, (970) 638-4511, clerk@townofyampa.com

Proposed Project: Narrative Proposal (completed as separate document)

Please attach a short PDF that answers the questions below. (Suggested length: 3-4 pages.) You will be able to upload the PDF at the end of this application. We welcome you to be as brief as possible and encourage the use of bullet points.

1. Organizational Background. What is your organization's mission? What is your experience supporting coal community transition? Tell us about your relationship to the community.

2. Community Conditions. Please describe the conditions in your community and the economic challenges it faces as a result of coal plant and/or mine closures. Which segments of the population are most affected (e.g., former coal workers, tribal communities, young people) and what are their key demographics (race, gender, poverty rates, education levels)? What specific problem are you trying to solve, and why are you uniquely situated to tackle it?

3. Big Idea, Vision, and Goals.

a. Big Idea. Please describe your big idea—the economic diversification and/or the workforce development project for which you would ultimately like to seek federal funding. (If you're leading a community planning effort in response to coal facility closures that spans multiple sectors and/or projects, please describe.)

Look at the DOLA Roadmaps for goals and sustainability of the NWCDC

b. Vision. How will this effort contribute to the revitalization of your local economy? In other words, what is your long-term, big picture vision of success? (DOLA Roadmaps)

c. Goals. What goals do you seek to achieve over the next year through the planning, project development, and/or capacity-building efforts that JTF funding would support? How would JTF support allow you to achieve these goals? (DOLA Roadmaps) JTF funding is important for implementation; leverage the JTF interagency working group connections to federal fundraisers;

8. Peer Learning. What would you hope to get out of being part of a cohort of peers from across the country? What would you hope to learn, and what would you want to share about your work?

Avoid pitfalls and lessons learned from other organizations; learn how other communities fund sustainable economic development

Attachments

- Proposal Narrative (Please attach a PDF that is no longer than 3-4 pages).
- Budget that demonstrates how JTF funds would be used (specific project development activities relating to piloting or scaling up a program, or to support organizational capacity)
- List of Board Members (if applicable)
- Timothy V. Corrigan. District 1 Commissioner, Chair Pro Tem.
- Timothy Redmond. District 2 Commissioner, Chair.
- Sonja Macys. District 3 Commissioner.
- If your organization is a nonprofit: Your 501c3 tax determination

letter

- If your organization has a fiscal sponsor: Fiscal sponsor

Memorandum of Understanding

- If your organization is a local government entity: Your W-9 issued/signed within the past two years
- Optional: Draft of federal proposal or letter of intent, if applicable. This is not a requirement.

Optional Questions

- Does your organization identify as BIPOC-led? If applicable, please describe what being BIPOC-led looks like for your organization.
- Does your organization collect any other demographic information about your leadership or team that you would like to share?
- Approximately how long did this application take you to

complete, including research, writing, and submission?

20 hours

- Did you find any bugs or errors in the application that we need to fix?

Some of the fields require a dollar amount entry, but in some instances we would have preferred to select N/A rather than listing \$0.

- Do you have any other feedback that will help us improve our application process?

It would be helpful to have all of the questions listed on a PDF so that we can see them in advance, rather than having to input text into the online form before being able to move on to the next set of questions. Some of the questions were listed on the PDF that you provided, but not all. It also would have been helpful to have a budget template. Thank you!