



Virginia Growth and Opportunity Fund (GO Virginia)

Statewide Competitive Fund - Project Guidance

Section I: GO Virginia Program Intent

The GO Virginia program was designed to help grow and diversify regional economies and increase wages in every region of the Commonwealth. Nine regional councils have organized and developed Growth and Diversification plans and strategies organized around their own unique resources and assets.

Virginia State Code establishes the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Fund and describes an allocation to be competitively awarded on the basis of expected economic impact without regard to a region's population. These Statewide Competitive funds have been created to support projects that demonstrate a benefit to more than one region or an extraordinary opportunity to the Commonwealth.

Projects seeking funding from the statewide competitive pool should demonstrate alignment with the goals and priorities of each of the regional growth and diversification plans of the localities represented in the application.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide clarity on the process for developing and submitting an application requesting the use of Statewide Competitive funds as well as the roles and responsibilities of collaborating Regional Councils.

Section II: Funding Available for Statewide Activities

Each year, the GO Virginia State Board determines the funding available for statewide competitive projects following an appropriation by the Virginia General Assembly

In April 2020, the Board created the Economic Resilience and Recovery Program that designated \$14.66M in one-time funding (FY20) for activities that help mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Of that, \$5.9M is available for statewide projects.

Current funding availability for statewide projects can be found under *General Program Information* at <https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/go-virginia-regional-materials>.



Section III: Roles and Responsibilities

Regional Councils may wish to partner on projects that have significant statewide impact and where they have shared interests (industry focus, common strategies) or where there would be efficiencies in operating at scale. All participating councils should be active participants in the project and share responsibility for the review of the application, as well as post-award grant progress monitoring to ensure the applicant is meeting its stated milestones and delivering the committed outcomes as described in their proposal.

When considering an application for a grant that involves more than one regional council, it is recommended that the process start with the formation of a staff workgroup to ensure the project's industry targets and objectives align with priorities in their respective Growth and Diversification plans and to ensure that the project produces outcomes consistent with the GO Virginia program. This workgroup should also play a continuing role to manage the application through the development and regional review/approval process. The collaborating councils will identify a Lead Regional Council who will be responsible for submitting the application to DHCD and will act as the Grantee for the project, if approved.

Lead Regional Council – The Lead Council assumes responsibility for receiving and vetting the application through its review process. The Lead Council staff will be a primary point of contact with the applicant and work to manage a streamlined and consistent communication process with the collaborating councils.

The Lead Council Chair is responsible for convening the chairs of the partnering councils to discuss the opportunity for collaboration, the project concept, and the potential economic impact of the application early in the process.

The Lead Council must involve each Partnering Council in the application development process and provide an opportunity to provide feedback to the applicant. The Lead Council ultimately votes to approve the project, but the application cannot advance to the State Board for consideration until an action of support (in the form of a vote) is taken by the Partnering Council(s). The Partnering Council must be provided access to the final approved application prior to taking an action of support.

Partnering Regional Council(s) – The Partnering Regional Council must participate actively as a member of the formed workgroup. Council leadership must engage with the Lead Council leadership and provide a letter of support for the project after acted upon by the Council. Partnering Council representatives are encouraged to participate in established advisory committees as described in the project application.

Applicant (subgrantee) – The applicant should first engage with the Lead Regional Council who will serve as a primary point of contact as well as the grantee for the project. The Lead Council will help to coordinate discussions with the formed workgroup. The workgroup members will develop a communication strategy and timeline with collaborating regional councils to ensure an efficient and effective application review process and ultimately approval of the project by the Lead Council and a fully informed action of support by the Partnering Councils. Should the project be awarded funds, the



subgrantee should provide periodic progress reports to the collaborating councils in addition to the quarterly reports required by DHCD.

Section IV: Local Participation and Match

All Go Virginia projects must have participation from 2 or more localities. For statewide competitive applications, the participation may come from two or more localities in the Lead Region, but are encouraged to involve two or more localities in each Partnering Region.

Unless otherwise stated, the GO Virginia project must have at least a 1:1 match and must come from non-state sources. Match contributions for statewide projects must be agreed to by all participating regions. Match may come from one or more sources in the Lead Region, but it is encouraged that partnering regions provide match in proportion to the anticipated benefit, or some other reasonable match sharing formula as agreed upon by the partnering regions.

For statewide projects that require local match, the match must be provided through at least two localities, regardless of region. Upon agreement of the collaborating regions, that local match may come from the Lead Region, but it is encouraged that partnering regions provide match in proportion to the anticipated benefit or some other reasonable match sharing formula.

Section V: Application and Approval Process

The Lead Region assumes responsibility for submitting the application to DHCD and, if awarded, will serve as the grantee for the project. An MOU among the collaborating regions will describe roles and responsibilities post award and will be included as part of the project contract.

State law requires that no single region receive total awards in excess of 25% of the total Virginia Growth and Opportunity Fund. Funds awarded for multi-region projects will be assigned to the collaborating regions in proportion to the benefit and based on submitted project budgets. If a proportionate distribution cannot be determined, it may be assigned on a per capita basis. DHCD, in consultation with the collaborating regions, may determine an alternate distribution method.

References:

[Virginia Growth and Opportunity Act](#)

[GO Virginia Statewide Competitive Project Application](#)

[Competitive Scoring Matrix](#)

[Economic Resilience and Recovery Statewide Program Application](#)

* Please note that this is a working document and may be updated periodically.