



Virginia Growth and Opportunity Fund (GO Virginia) Regional Collaboration & Local participation Guidance

Regional Collaboration

The GO Virginia program incentivizes regional collaboration around initiatives designed to grow and diversify regional economies and create higher paying jobs in targeted traded industry sectors. State Code defines a regional activity as follows:

"Regional activity" means an economic or workforce development-focused collaborative project or program that is (i) endorsed by a regional council, (ii) consistent with the economic growth and diversification plan developed by the regional council, and (iii) carried out, performed on behalf of, or contracted for by two or more localities, political subdivisions, or public bodies corporate and politic within a region.

Local Participation

Eligible projects must have the participation of two or more localities, political subdivisions, or public bodies, both corporate and political, within a region. This includes an expectation that the localities will play an active role in the development of the project proposal and remain engaged in the project after the award announcement. While local match may not be required for an individual project, it is important to note that applications that include local match are not just preferred but also viewed as favorable. Including local match significantly enhances the project's regional support and sustainability while highlighting the importance of their contribution.

Partnering localities may demonstrate collaboration and meaningful participation in several ways, including, but not limited to the following:

- Cash or in-kind contributions (non-state funds) to the project made by partnering localities or by an intermediary on behalf of two or more of their local government members (e.g. regional economic development organization, local EDAs, PDC¹);
- Active ongoing participation on a steering committee or advisory group tasked to guide or oversee implementation of the project;
- Utilization of a Regional Facility Industrial Authority or other similar, formal regional intermediary that outlines an agreed upon cost-sharing mechanism;

¹ Please reference [Match Guidelines](#) and specific guidance for documenting Pass Through Local Match, *In order to document funds as part of local match, a commitment letter from the organization should include: a list of localities that contributed to the local match, the total \$ amount received from localities, and an indication of whether the locality(s) authorized the local match through representation on the organization's Board, or through additional documentation attached.*



- Federal recovery funds (CARES, ARPA) provided by a locality and designated to support an eligible activity related to a project will be qualified as local match;

Letters of support should describe how the localities are contributing in one or more of the above activities, and submitted applications must include signed in-kind contribution forms as applicable. Letters of support are not sufficient to demonstrate regional collaboration or meaningful local participation.

Evaluating Regional Collaboration

Consistent with enabling legislation, the level of regional collaboration presented in applications will be evaluated based on the following factors:

- The expected economic impact or outcome of the activity, with particular emphasis on goals identified in the regional council's plan for economic growth and diversification;
- The fiscal resources from non-Fund sources that will be committed to the activity, including local or federal funds, private contributions, and cost savings expected to be achieved through regional collaboration;
- The number and percentage of localities, including political subdivisions and bodies corporate and politic, within the region that are participating in the activity, the portion of the region's population represented by the participating localities, and the participation of localities that are outside of the applicant region;
- The compatibility with other projects, programs, or existing infrastructure in a region to maximize the leverage of grants from the Fund to encourage new collaborative activities;
- The expected economic impact and outcomes of the project and the complexity of the project relative to the size of the economy of the region or to the population of the participating localities;
- The projected cost savings and other efficiencies generated by the proposed activity, and the local resources generated by collaboration that have been or will be repurposed to support the activity;
- The character of the regional collaboration, including the nature and extent of the regional effort involved in developing and implementing the proposed activity, the complexity of the activity, the prospective impact on relations between and among the affected localities, and the prospective impact on collaboration between and among business, education, and government entities in the region;



- Interstate, inter-regional, and other beneficial forms of collaboration, if any, that will accompany, result from, or be encouraged by the activity;
- Efficiency in the administration and oversight of regional activities; and
- Other factors deemed to be appropriate by the Board.