



# Draft Grant Application

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Prepared by the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR  
**GROWTH &  
OPPORTUNITY**  
IN EACH REGION

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## Grant Application

### **Overview:**

The Region 2 GO Virginia Council is now accepting proposals for funding. Region 2 includes the counties of Alleghany, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Roanoke; as well as the independent cities of Covington, Lynchburg, Radford, Roanoke, and Salem.

At this stage, there are at least \$500,000 available for award in the region, with more funds possible for future solicitations depending on state GO Virginia Board decisions concerning pending funding and the allocation of possible additional funding, as well as approximately \$11.2 million in competitive state-wide funds expected to be available. The Council anticipates granting multiple funding awards at varying amounts. GO Virginia funding seeks to grow jobs that pay higher than the regional median wage (\$18/hour or \$37,000 annually), and attracts new investment, especially new to Virginia. This requires a focus on industries with high growth potential, featuring in-demand occupations with higher wages.

### **Available funds:**

The Region 2 GO Virginia Council anticipates funding multiple awards ranging from \$50,000-\$300,000 per award. All projects must be completed within two years of funding. The Region 2 Council expects to disburse the vast majority of funds for collaborative grant projects as described below. All proposals must respond directly to the Region 2 Growth & Diversification Plan which can be found at the following link: <http://bit.ly/2ws9B18>

There may be rare instances, however, where the Region 2 Council may award capacity building funds for a project not otherwise suitable for a collaborative grant award. During the project review process, Region 2 Council support organization personnel may advise applicants as to the degree to which their proposal is congruent with state and regional guidelines. Support organization staff may also discuss the appropriateness of enhanced capacity building awards, for projects that would not have immediate economic outcomes. As an example, a larger future project request might require pre-development activities, which the Council may want to encourage through a small amount of capacity-building award funding.

### **Funding Match:**

A dollar for dollar match is required for any grant request. The match must come from non-state appropriated sources such as non-state public entities, private, federal, or local funds or in-kind commitments.

In addition to the dollar for dollar baseline match requirement, it is the goal of the State Board that there be a contribution from localities, 2 or more counties or cities, of not less than a total 20% of the required match, or \$50,000 in total, whichever is greater. Towns with substantive involvement in economic development may be substituted for cities or counties to meet this requirement.

The State GO Virginia Board may waive this requirement of locality match, to half of the required amount, upon a finding of fiscal distress or an exceptional economic opportunity within the



collaborating localities. Likewise, the requirement for two city or county contribution to match may also be waived for projects that clearly serve more than 50% of the regions' population.

This local contribution may come from any combination of the participating localities and political subdivisions and may take the form of cash, revenue sharing, dedication of locally-owned or controlled assets to the proposed regional project, reallocation of existing funds, in kind contributions, or other local resources. Also, existing investments by localities and political subdivisions that are redirected, repurposed, or refocused towards collaborative regional grant requests will count as local match. Please note that the State Board also reserves the right to waive the local contribution for enhanced capacity building projects that demonstrate an ability to benefit multiple GO Virginia regions or grant requests.

Applicants should clearly identify how the participating localities will make available the required local contribution. The application should also outline the status of the other non-local government contributions to the project.

**Letters of Interest and Regional Capacity Building:**

Potentially interested applicants are required to submit a no more than 2 page letter of interest that could speak to some or all of these points:

- Includes the name and contact information of the expected primary applicant
- Identifies Region 2 jurisdictions to be impacted/involved
- Includes list of likely partners and collaborators
- Provides a brief narrative description of the project (250 words max)
- Identifies likely total costs including anticipated GO Virginia request and matching fund sources
- Includes a clear description of expected outcome or result - clearly describing how the project would spur growth of higher-wage jobs in one or more of Region 2's priority clusters AND respond to one or more of the identified strategies in the Region 2 Economic Growth and Diversification Plan

All those potentially interested are encouraged to submit a letter, even if brief and incomplete in order to begin the process of engaging with support staff personnel. Letters may be submitted that do not yet have some of these details in order to accelerate staff feedback and ensure that applicants are able to access and complete the full application in a timely manner. Interested applicants should review the Region 2 Growth & Diversification Plan prior to submitting their inquiry or application. The plan can be found at the following link: <http://bit.ly/2ws9B18>

The letter of interest process supports possible applicants by eliciting feedback and guidance on the appropriateness of potential projects for GO Virginia funding. Letters of interest should be submitted electronically to:

John Provo, Ph.D.  
Director, Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development  
702 University City Blvd., Mail Code 0373  
Blacksburg, VA 24061  
[jprovo@vt.edu](mailto:jprovo@vt.edu)



Within 2 business days of receipt, Region 2 staff will contact inquirers to discuss the projects and to answer questions about alignment for a formal application. For questions prior to submission, please contact John Provo via email [jprovo@vt.edu](mailto:jprovo@vt.edu) or by phone 540-231-5278.

**Eligible Applicants:**

Region 2 includes the counties of Alleghany, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Roanoke; as well as the independent cities of Covington, Lynchburg, Radford, Roanoke, and Salem. Proposals require the collaboration of at least two localities, which may be any combination of counties, cities and towns and/or political subdivisions, public bodies corporate and politic, along with other public or private entities. Political subdivisions or public bodies corporate that represent the same county or city will not be counted as a separate locality. Public or private entities that may pursue and administer grant funding include, but are not limited to, other political subdivisions of the state, foundations, non-profit entities, colleges and universities, other educational entities, economic development organizations, workforce boards, local governments, regional council support organizations, and other stakeholders. A town, with the county that surrounds it, may petition the Board for the ability to apply for a grant, if the parties can demonstrate that their collaboration is substantive and aligned with the goals of GO Virginia.

While a private company may apply, in cooperation with the collaborating localities and other stakeholders, to participate in or manage a project, grant funds are not to be used as economic development incentive payments or to promote the activities of a single entity. Instead, grant funds are to be used to support the implementation of requests aligned with plan priorities and that offer broad community benefits. Financial participation by the collaborating localities is required as part of any application for a grant allocation, and the minimum threshold for such participation is outlined in the funding match section of these guidelines. The roles of the various participants in applying for and administering a proposed project shall also be set forth in the grant application.

**Full application submission:**

Applicants who submit a letter of interest and who seem to meet the threshold criteria for eligibility will be provided access to the online CAMS application system. Full applications for the first round of GO Virginia Region 2 Council funding may be submitted beginning on February 1, 2018. **Applicants must complete the online CAMS application and include all required attachments on or before Wednesday, February 14 at 5 pm. in order for the applications to be reviewed and considered for funding at the Region 2 Council Meeting on February 23, 2018.** Support organization staff will oversee a subject matter review process prior to the Council Meeting.

Applications recommended for funding by the Region 2 Council will be submitted to the state office on March 12 by 5 pm. The state review process will take place in March and applications will be considered for funding at the state GO Virginia Board meeting on April 10, 2018.

**Project evaluation criteria:**

- Economic impact (35%):
  - To what extent does the project spur the growth of higher-wage jobs in one or more of Region 2's priority clusters: manufacturing; life sciences and health care; food and beverage processing; and emerging technologies and IT?
  - To what extent does the project respond to one of the strategies in the Region 2 Economic Growth and Diversification Plan related to: advancing technology and high-growth clusters; growing skilled talent; supporting entrepreneurship; and collaborative development of sites and buildings?
  - To what extent, does the proposal outline the expected return on investment of the proposed project and the timeline for achieving that return?
  
- Regional collaboration (30%)
  - To what extent does the project show evidence of widespread benefit to the larger region?
  - To what extent does the project engage localities and partnerships (including private or corporate partnership)?
  - To what extent does the project identify cost efficiencies, repurposing of existing funds, leveraging of existing assets or other evidence of collaboration benefits?
  - To what extent has the project involved businesses, colleges and universities, and other public and private entities within the region in the conceptualization of and the implementation of the project?
  - To what extent does the amount, timing, and form of the proposed project match indicate the depth of the commitment by the public and private funding partners to the effort?
  - To what extent does the proposed project inventory related efforts and seek to ensure it is not duplicative of, but additive to, other efforts to support economic diversification and the creation of more higher-paying jobs?
  
- Project readiness (20%)
  - To what extent do the applicant and project partners demonstrate and describe capabilities to successfully execute the project?
  - To what extent does the proposed project fully assess the barriers to successful implementation and other associated risks along with a plan to overcome them?
  - To what extent do the project partners and lead entities have sufficient financial management, personnel, and organizational capacity to ensure effective management and compliance?
  
- Project sustainability and innovation (15%)
  - To what extent is the project innovative, forward looking, and offers potential to promote sustainable long-term economic growth in the region?



- To what extent does the project provide a plan for sustainability beyond GO Virginia funding, if appropriate?
- To what extent does the project demonstrate leverage above the required amounts, from any source?

The anticipated return on investment of a proposed project resulting from the GO grants is one of the key measures to be used by the Board in making funding allocations. In calculating the anticipated return on investment for proposed grant requests, applicants should outline the anticipated jobs and capital investment that could accrue from the project over a two-year period that aligns with the likely payout schedule of a grant, as well as over the longer term. Using those factors, the applicant should outline the anticipated state and local tax revenues that will result from the proposed activity. When determining the economic impact of a proposed grant request, the Board will give preference to those applications which can demonstrate that the GO Virginia portion of the grant is recouped within three years, however, projects that may have a smaller return in the initial phases, but a larger anticipated longer term impact (taking into account the likelihood of future success) will receive special consideration. In addition to these objective factors, applicants should outline other measures of success, such as new collaborative agreements, revenue sharing, cost savings and efficiencies resulting from the project, or other items that can be used by the Board to understand the financial viability of the project. Another variable that the Board will use in determining the return on investment is any information provided by the applicant about previous successes involving the applicant on similar initiatives. It is understood that certain project types will have a longer timetable to achieve their expected return on investment.

Projects will NOT be eligible for Council funding if the funds impact only a single locality; focus on quality of life activities; support trade missions; fund construction or transportation projects; fund museum or entertainment venues; or lack alternative or matching funding.

**Project evaluation process:**

Once submitted, Region 2 Council support organization staff will perform a technical review of all completed applications to assess compliance with minimum criteria and eligibility. Applications that meet the threshold criteria will be sorted into groups based on their fit with the plan's four strategy areas: advancing technology and high-growth clusters; growing skilled talent; supporting entrepreneurship; and collaborative development of sites and buildings. While a project may very well impact more than one of these strategy areas, a small review team of subject-matter experts and Council staff will be identified for each of these topics. The subject-matter experts and Council staff will review applications and provide evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of the projects. All applications and the assessments will be sent to the Region 2 Council for review and action. The Region 2 Council, at their discretion and in some instances, may ask qualified applicants to appear in-person to provide additional information. Subsequent to the review and approval by the Region 2 Council, the state GO Virginia Board must also review and provide final approval of all applications.

The Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development serves as the support organization for the Region 2 Council. In cases where Virginia Tech should appear as a primary applicant for Council funding, the

technical and subject matter review will be led by representatives from a regional entity not directly associated with Virginia Tech.

Region 2 staff will ensure that any reviewers who are full-time employees of applicant organizations, will not perform reviews of their employer organizations. In some instances, reviewers may also have an interest in or connection to one or more of the applicant organizations (such as serving as a board member or volunteer). Region 2 staff will expect reviewers and applicants to disclose any such connections.





**Anticipated timeline for early 2018:**

January 2018	Letters of Interest accepted through Friday, February 2 at 5 pm.  Region 2 support organization staff responds to Letters of Interest and assists and advises interested applicants
February 14, 2018	Applicants must complete the online CAMS application and include all required attachments on or before Wednesday, February 14 at 5 pm.
February 2018	Staff and Subject Matter review applications and provide synthesis feedback to Council.
February 23, 2018	Region 2 Council meets and considers any completed and reviewed applications received to date.
March 12, 2018	Any proposals recommended for funding are submitted to Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and state GO Virginia Board for additional review.
March 2018	State-level review process
April 10, 2018	State GO Virginia Board considers applications for funding.

**Application instructions:**

Applicants will be able to access the application through the DHCD CAMS system beginning Feb 1. For preparation purposes, the submission information is detailed on the pages that follow and consists of general applicant information form, narrative questions, and a number of required attachments.



**Part 1: Applicant information Form**

Applicant Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (street): \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code (5 digit AND +4) \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_ EIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Primary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond as to whether each of the localities listed is in your project’s primary service area:

County	YES/NO	City	YES/NO
Alleghany		Covington	
Amherst		Lynchburg	
Appomattox		Radford	
Bedford		Roanoke	
Botetourt		Salem	
Campbell			
Craig			
Floyd			
Franklin			
Giles			
Montgomery			
Pulaski			
Roanoke			

GO Virginia Funding Requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Project Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated fiscal agent for project if different than applicant: \_\_\_\_\_



**NOTE: Templates/instructions are provided for some of the attachments below.**

### **Economic Impact**

1. Provide a detailed overview of the proposed project and project activities included in the project budget. If the full project scope goes beyond the reflected budget, please provide a breakdown of the current and later phases of project activities. **ATTACHMENTS:** A 1-2-page Executive Summary should be uploaded with the application.
2. Identify the project goals, approach, and outcomes, and how the project relates to the region's Economic Growth and Diversification plan and the goals of GO Virginia.
3. Describe the project timeline and the specific project milestones that will be utilized to track project progress and fund disbursement. Address the project administrator's ability to meet these milestones and to take remedial actions in the event that are not achieved. **ATTACHMENTS:** Project Milestones including a proposed Drawdown Schedule should be uploaded with the application.
4. Provide a detailed description of the performance metrics that will be used to quantify success, both quantitative and qualitative, and how the metrics were developed. Describe the Return on Investment (ROI) methodology and calculated ROI and the timeline for achieving the expected ROI. Include an explanation and source of any data used as the basis for ROI and outcome projections. **ATTACHMENTS:** Performance Measures and ROI Calculations should be uploaded with the application.

### **Regional Collaboration**

5. Describe the service area of the project. Identify localities participating in the project (financially or administratively) as well as those localities that are served by the project. **ATTACHMENTS:** Relevant letters of commitment (including in-kind contribution forms) or support from localities or local government entities should be uploaded with the application.
  - a. What portion of the region's population is served by the project? How was this figure calculated?
  - b. Does the application request a waiver of the local match requirement? (\$50,000 or 20% provided by participating localities, whichever is greater).
  - c. Are there localities or other GO Virginia regions (including interstate collaborations) that are outside the applying region that are participating in the project? If so, describe the nature of the collaboration and the anticipated impact.



6. Identify cost efficiencies, repurposing of existing funds, leveraging of existing assets, or other evidence of collaboration that can be demonstrated as a result of the project.
7. Discuss existing grant requests or programs with similar goals and indicate how the proposed project is not duplicative of, but additive to, other efforts to support economic diversification and the creation of higher-paying jobs. Have existing efforts been successful and sustainable?
  - a. For enhanced capacity building projects, discuss how the enhanced capacity building effort could contribute to the success of associated future grant requests and how the project could be replicated or used across multiple grant requests and/or regions.

### **Project Readiness**

8. Describe all partner organizations involved with the implementation of the project, including the entity's role, financial or in-kind commitment, and capacity to successfully execute their duties as they relate to the project. These may include but are not limited to school divisions, community colleges, public and private institutions of higher education, economic and workforce development entities, local governments, regional organizations, planning district commissions, nonprofit organizations, and private-sector entities.
9. Discuss any major barriers to successful implementation and other associated risks along with a plan to overcome them. How will the project administrator address these barriers?
10. Discuss prerequisite activities undertaken by the collaborating parties to increase efficiency with regard to program delivery and support for the project once launched.
11. Discuss how the regional council and project developers have consulted with subject matter experts regarding the efficacy and viability of the proposal and how the methodology and approach has been validated.
12. Discuss how the regional council and project developers have consulted with local government entities regarding the strategy and implementation of the project.
13. Identify the total project budget and the sources and uses for matching funds and leverage.
  - a. Does the project have the required \$1:1 match? If so, what are the sources/uses for these funds?
  - b. Does the project have the required 20% (or \$50,000 if request is less than \$250k) local match? If so, what are the sources/uses for these funds?
  - c. Are any additional funds or in-kind contributions serving as leverage for the project? If so, what are the sources/uses for these funds?

- d. **ATTACHMENTS:** Financial commitment letters and In-Kind Contribution forms should be uploaded with the application.

### **Project Sustainability**

- 14.** Discuss how the program will achieve stable, long-term sustainability beyond the initial funding period? Have any funding sources been secured to continue implementing the program or strategy following the exhaustion of these funds?

### **Required Attachments**

- Executive Summary
- Milestones Overview
- Return on Investment
- Performance Metrics
- Letter of Commitment
- In-Kind Contributions From: Template
- Letters of Support
- Budget Overview: Sources & Uses Template

### **Optional Attachments**

- Waiver request
- Resume for Project Managers