



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (“RFP”)

Impact Report Consultant

Release Date: May 30, 2025

Proposal Due Date: July 15, 2025

Selection Date: Aug 15, 2025

Contract Period: Sept 1, 2025 – November 30, 2025

I. Overview of Request for Proposals

Appalachian Community Capital (ACC) is seeking an experienced consultant (contractor) to prepare a report evaluating the performance and outcomes of 13 community lenders that received grants to support underserved businesses in low-income communities within the Appalachian region. The goal of the report is to quantify and qualify the impact of the grants on diverse small businesses for the promotion of resilience and economic development.

The contractor will report to the President and CEO of ACC.

The Scope of Services includes:

1. Data Collection and Aggregation
 - Work closely with the Chief Lending & Impact Officer to collect data from 13 community lenders on key performance indicators (KPIs)
 - Review grantee reports, financial and lending data, and qualitative feedback
 - Ensure consistency and accuracy in data across organizations.
2. Impact Measurement & Analysis
 - Assess economic and social impact of grants including
 - Number and demographics of businesses served
 - Loan Activity within the targeted area
 - Job creation / retention
 - Organizational level outcomes
 - Capacity-building outcomes
3. Stakeholder Engagement
 - Conduct interviews or surveys with selected grantees, borrowers and community stakeholders
 - Incorporate success stories

4. Reporting

- Deliver a comprehensive impact report (30-40 pages) including:
 - Executive Summary
 - Methodology
 - Findings (Quantitative and Qualitative)
 - Success Stories
 - Visual Data Representations (charts, graphs, maps)
 - Recommendations for future funding or support initiatives
- Provide a presentation deck summarizing findings for key stakeholders

Contractors interested in providing these services should submit proposals to Kelli Bryant kbryant@acc1.org. by 11:59 EDT on July 15, 2025. Proposals will be reviewed upon receipt.

II. About Appalachian Community Capital

Founded in 2013, ACC is a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) serving member CDFIs across the 13-state footprint of Appalachia with a mission to increase small

business lending across this underserved and primarily rural region. By providing capital, capacity building, and innovative programming to its members, ACC catalyzes entrepreneurship, opportunity, and growth in distressed communities. ACC has 43 members who manage over \$4 billion in total assets. Investors and supporters of ACC include: the Appalachian Regional Commission, US Treasury CDFI Fund, the Ford Foundation, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Truist, US Bank, Wells Fargo, Benedum Foundation, Dogwood Foundation, Mastercard Foundation, and many others. Visit [Appalachian Community Capital](#) for more information.

III. About the Appalachian Region

The Appalachian Region, as defined in ARC's authorizing legislation, is a 205,000 square-mile region that follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. It includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Forty-two percent of the Region's population is rural, compared with 20 percent of the national population.

The Appalachian Region's economy, which was once highly dependent on extractive industries, has become more diversified in recent times and now includes larger shares of manufacturing and professional services, among other industries. Appalachia has made significant progress over the past five decades: its poverty rate, which was 31 percent in 1960, had fallen to 16.3 percent over the 2013– 2017 period. The number of high poverty counties in the Region (those with poverty rates more than 1.5 times the U.S. average) declined from 295 in 1960 to 98 over the 2013–2017 period.

These gains have transformed the Region from one of widespread poverty to one of economic contrasts: some communities have successfully diversified their economies, while others still require basic infrastructure such as roads, clinics, and water and wastewater systems. The contrasts are not surprising considering the Region's size and diversity—the Region extends more than 1,000 miles from southern New York to northeastern Mississippi, and it is home to more than 25 million people.



IV. Timeline

- Kick-Off: September 15, 2025
- Draft Report Due: October 30, 2025
- Final Report Due: November 15, 2025

V. Instructions to Submit a Proposal

Contractors seeking to provide services should submit the following:

- Description of relevant activities undertaken with clients, or in prior roles.
- Budget that provides rates and payment schedule, including any indirect costs.
- Biography/resume for all personnel noted in proposal.
- Organizational Background, if relevant.
- References.

Please provide a cover letter and the above information in one pdf to Kelli Bryant kbryant@acc1.org. by 11:59 EDT on July 15, 2025. Review of submissions will begin upon receipt.

VI. Proposal Evaluation

ACC will select contractors through a competitive process based on qualifications, expertise, track record, and cost. See Attachment A for requested Qualifications.

ACC is an equal opportunity employer / contractor. We are committed to creating a collaborative and thriving work environment for all contractors and employees. It is ACC's commitment to treat all its employees and contractors with dignity and respect and to provide a workplace that is free from discrimination, whether that discrimination is based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, political affiliation, marital status, ages, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, or other nonmerit factors. ACC strives to build a team that is representative of the communities we serve.



Attachment A Preferred Qualifications - Impact Report Consultant

1. Professional Experience & Expertise

- Experience in evaluation and impact assessment for large-scale programs or grants.
- Sector-specific knowledge relevant to the grant (underserved small business, economic development).
- Proven experience producing impact or evaluation reports.
- Experience living in or working with rural and underserved communities a plus.

2. Academic Qualifications

- A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field (e.g., Public Policy, Economics, Social Sciences, Program Evaluation).

3. Methodological Proficiency

- Familiarity in both qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Familiarity with logic models, theory of change, key performance indicators (KPIs), and data collection tools (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- Ability to present analysis and utilize evaluation software.

4. Compliance & Ethical Standards

- Knowledge of CDFI industry
- Knowledge of grant compliance

5. Reporting & Communication Skills

- Ability to produce clear, compelling, and evidence-based reports tailored to different stakeholders (funders, community, policymakers).

- Strong writing and presentation skills.

6. References and Work Samples

- Demonstrated history of successful evaluations through references, or sample reports.
- Ideally, a portfolio showing completed impact assessments with measurable outcomes.

7. Organizational Capacity (for firms only)

- Adequate staff capacity and a multi-disciplinary team.
- Evidence of past performance on contracts.
- Insurance coverage (e.g., professional liability)

