



APPALACHIAN GATEWAY COMMUNITIES

2024 REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

April 15-18, 2024 | DoubleTree Riverfront - Decatur, AL



Informational Webinar

January 10, 2024



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

THE
CONSERVATION FUND

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT for the **ARTS**
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The Conservation Fund



We protect America's most critical lands and waters to provide greater access to nature, strengthen local economies and enhance climate resiliency. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states since 1985 to protect more than 8.8 million acres of land.

We believe in conservation that makes economic sense. Every project places conservation at its center, and we create and implement innovative, practical ways to benefit the natural world and the well-being of people and the environment.

The Conservation Fund – Balancing Nature & Commerce

- Catalyze collaborative action, cultivate local leadership and advance solutions
 - Work in gateway communities that are economically reliant on nearby lands and waters, and through technical assistance and workshops
 - Convene and connect through our process
 - Facilitate community identification of assets and development of vision and implementation strategies
 - Share current data, emerging trends, and best practices through our products



Agenda

- AGCI Program Overview
- 2024 Program Details
- Application Process
- Application Components
- Q&A



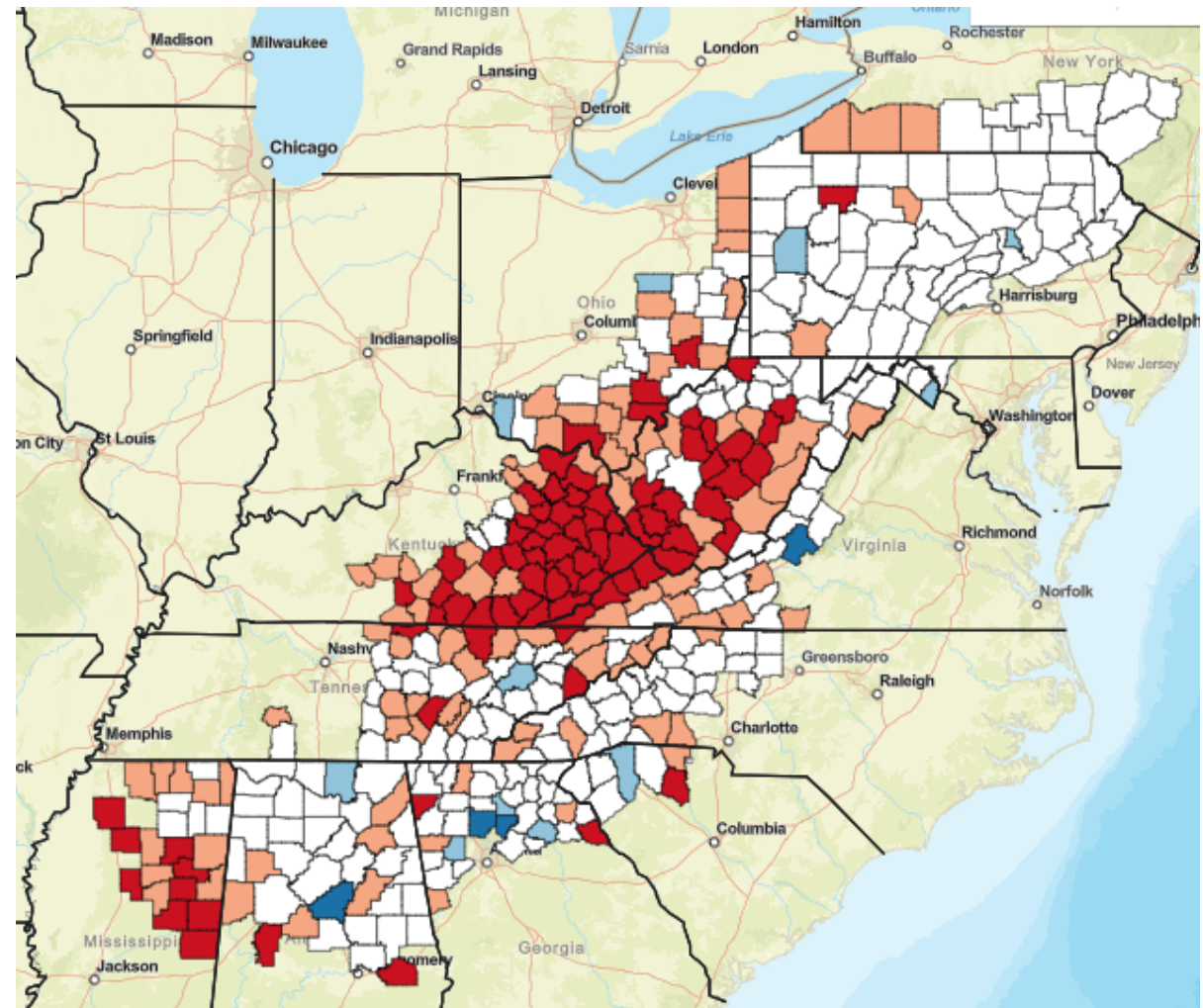
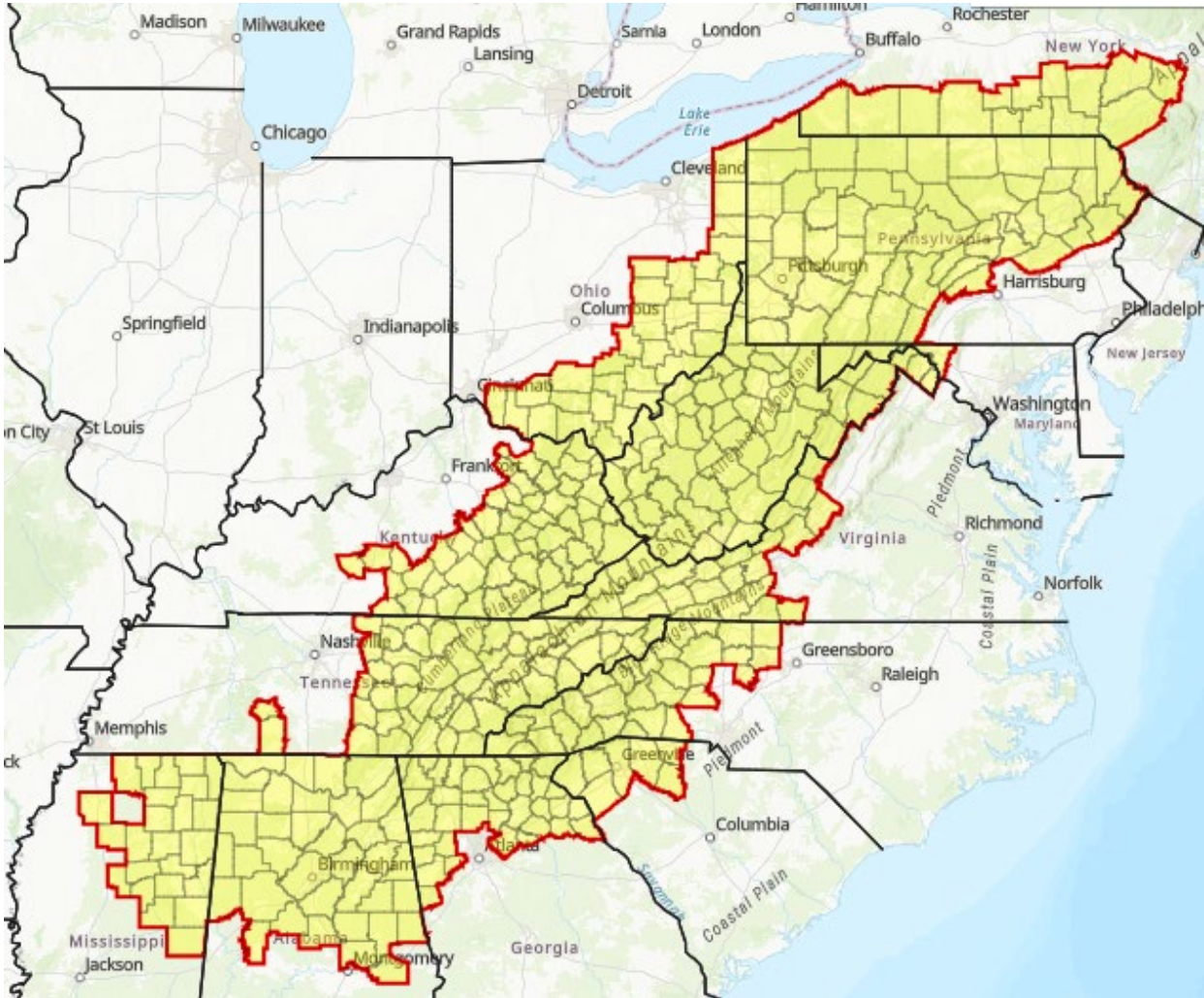
AGCI Program Overview – History

- Origin & evolution
- 2007 launch
- 12+ workshops
- 46+ seed grants
- 51 counties across the region
- Investments in action:

<https://www.arc.gov/investment/appalachian-gateway-communities-initiative-providing-tools-for-tourism/>



AGCI Program Overview – Eligibility



AGCI Program Overview – Arts



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AGCI Program – Gateway Community Focus

- Gateway Community: where you can deeply connect with public lands and that connection is more meaningful because of community ownership of that identity
- What are public lands? Think like a visitor



Are you a gateway community?

- Assets and amenities
- Programming and interpretation
- Visitor services
- Communications and marketing
- Commitment and capacity



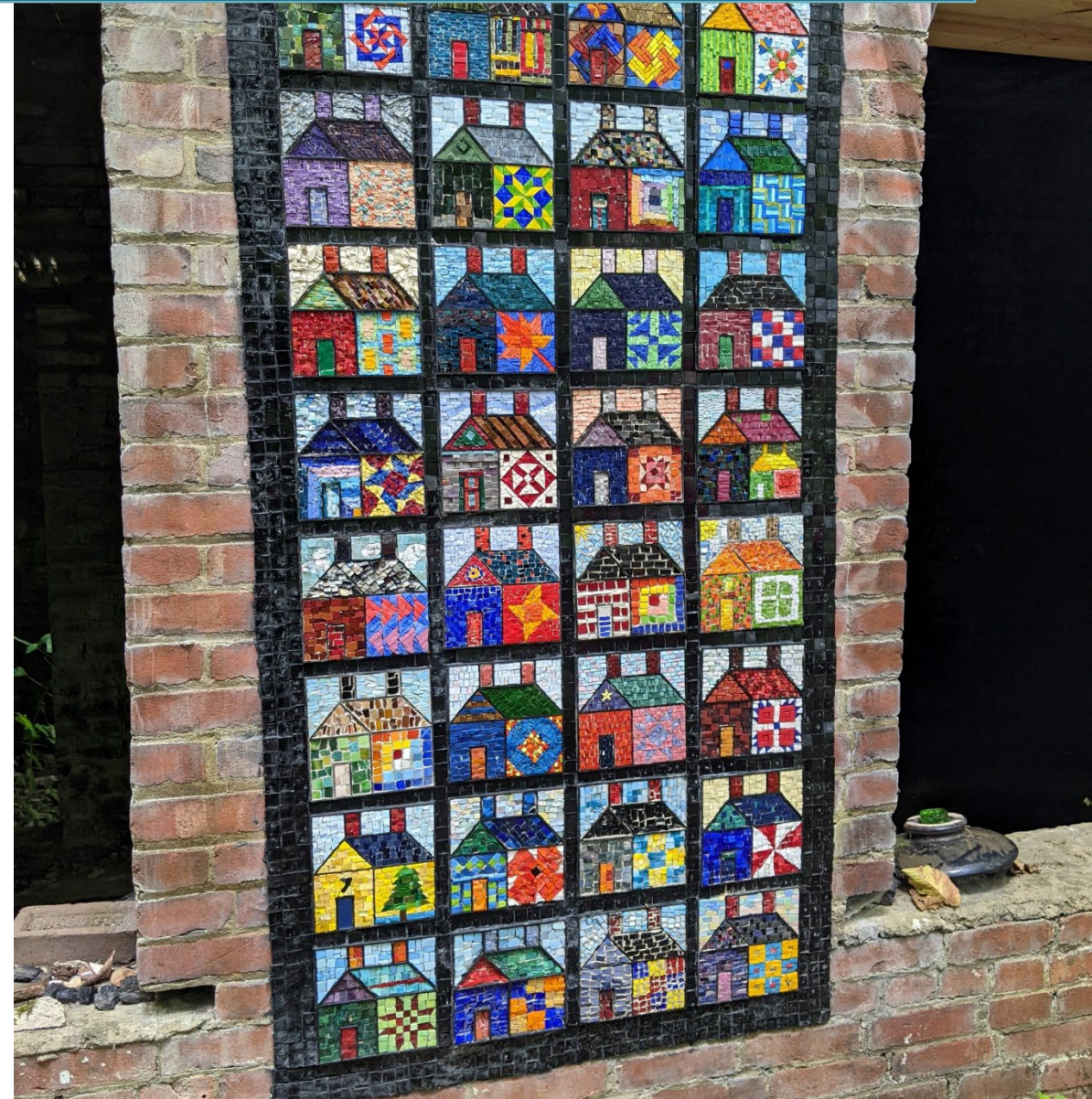
AGCI Program – Outcomes

➤ General outcomes:

- Leverage natural & cultural assets
- Revitalize main streets & downtowns
- Promote arts & culture opportunities
- Build cultural heritage & natural resource tourism
- Create lasting economic opportunity

➤ Specific outcomes:

- Action plan for team-selected project
- Seed grant opportunity



AGCI Program – Outcomes

- Tracy City TN
 - Downtown park...events...trail
- Princeton WV
 - Festival...public art...branding
- Outcomes
 - People: connections
 - Structure: framework for focus, collaboration, creation & action
 - Technical content: data, trends, best practices...
 - Seed grant opportunity...visible win



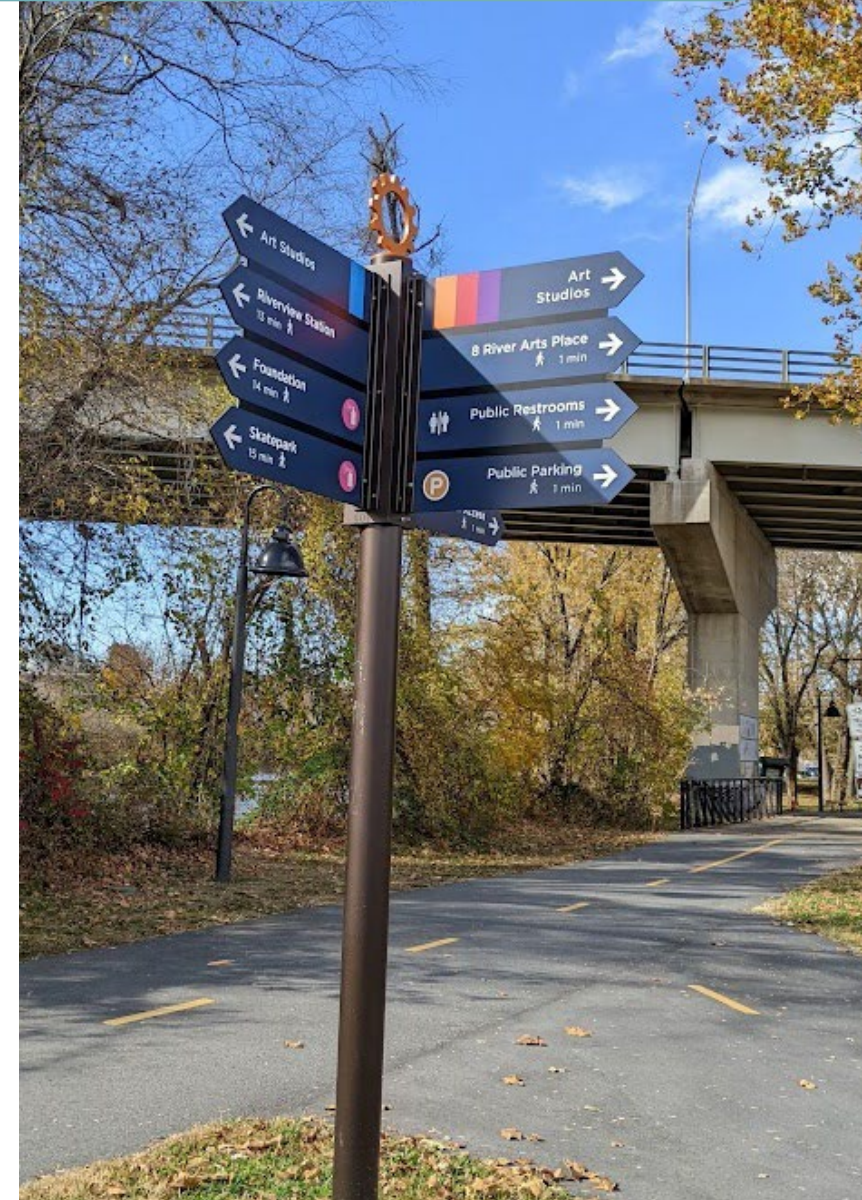
AGCI Program – Structure & Format

➤ Structure:

- 2 pre-workshop webinars
- In-person 3-day workshop
- Optional advance tour
- 2 post-workshop webinars
- Seed grants

➤ Format:

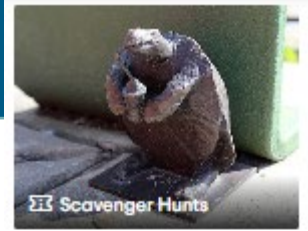
- Interactive
- Discuss/
converse/
create
- Coaching
- Space is
limited



AGCI Program – Content

➤ Content and value:

- Placemaking & placekeeping
- Trends in gateway communities
- Share your story: branding & marketing.
- Natural resources & working lands
- Arts & culture in your community
- Case studies
- Resources



AGCI Program – Team Make-up

- Community leader, public land representative, arts representative
- 5 – 8 team members at workshop
- Diversity that demonstrates community-wide support for participation
- Who has the energy?
- Who implements?



AGCI Program – Cost

- Team registration fee: \$600 *due by March 8th*
 - Program content and food at workshop is included
- Other cost for selected teams:
 - Lodging during in-person workshop
 - Travel to & from in-person workshop
- Team assistance may be available (*need-based*)



LOI & Application Process – Important Dates

- Letter of Interest Deadline: Jan 24 by 5 pm ET
 - open now
- Team Application Deadline: Feb 6 by 5 pm ET
 - open mid-January
- Team Selection/Notification: Feb 23
- Pre-workshop webinars: March 13 & 20
- In-person Workshop: April 16 – 18, 15th optional
 - Decatur, Alabama is Central Time
- Post-workshop webinars: May, TBD
- Seed grant application process: June, TBD



Application Process – Selection Criteria

SEEKING: Identification of challenges and opportunities in the gateway community, with a focus on arts promotion and recreation resources—especially in downtown areas, and natural and cultural heritage tourism opportunities. Preference to:

- Applications seeking to address challenges of particular importance to gateway communities
- Applications that identify opportunities for public arts
- Teams representing at least one county classified as ‘distressed’ or ‘at-risk’ by ARC
- Teams with diverse representation of their community
- Teams that submit a letter of interest (due January 24th)



Application Process – Context & Reminders

- Do responses in a word document and copy/paste over
- The application form will be online; link will be posted to: <https://www.conservationfund.org/appalachian-gateway-community-initiative-2024>
- Map attachment? Email Susan Elks at selks@conservationfund.org
- One application per team/per community
- Need a team lead
- Notification by February 23rd; team fee due by March 8th
- Application Admin: Gather contact information! Gather details for any team financial assistance request.
- Application: Gateway Community Context (2 pages suggested)
- Application: Responses (2 – 3 pages suggested)



Application Components – General Info & Team Members

Administrative Information

1. Contact Information for Lead Applicant

Name and Affiliation (title and organization)

Mailing Address

Phone

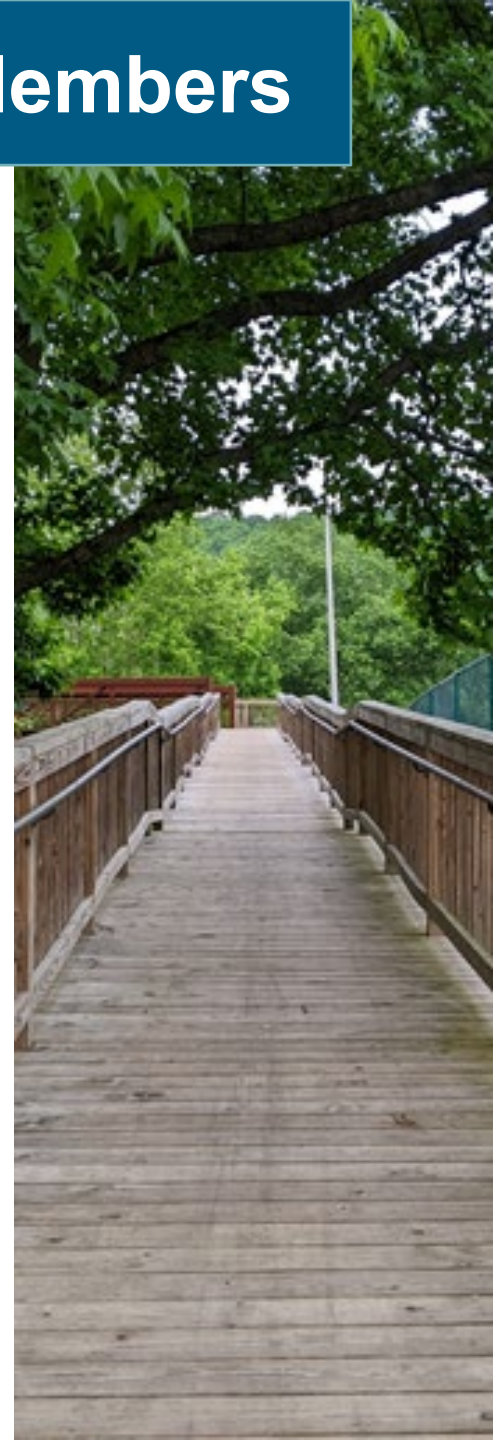
Email

2. Team Member Information and Affiliation

List each team member, their contact information, and a description of their role in the community, noting who is serving as the roles of community leader, public land representative, and arts organization representative.

3. Financial Assistance

If applicable, please note your team's need for financial assistance. Please provide details, and specify the amount requested and how it would be used (such as to offset lodging or travel, which team members are requesting support, or a request to waive the team fee).



Application Components – Place

Gateway Community Context

4. Area Description (*approximately 2 pages*)

Address the following three items:

4.A. *Describe the geographic boundaries* of the team requesting to participate in the training program – city, county, multi-county region.

List the neighboring public land(s) for which you are a gateway community. A map that shows the boundaries of your community (city, county, or region) as well as neighboring public land(s) can be submitted by email to selks@conservationfund.org.

4.B. *Describe the economic conditions* of the target area, including its ARC designation of distressed, transitional, or transitional/at-risk ARC counties. For more information, go to

<https://www.arc.gov/classifying-economic-distress-in-appalachian-counties/>

4.C. *Briefly describe the relationship between the community and neighboring public land.*



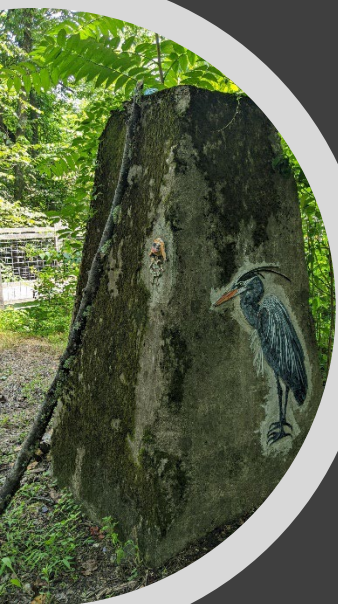
Application Components – Questions

5. Outcomes, Opportunities, Challenges, Arts, and Community Capacity Responses

(approximately 2-3 pages)

Address the following five questions:

- A. *What outcomes* does your team hope to get from participating in this program?
- B. *What opportunities and challenges* do your community and/or public land seek to address?
- C. *What efforts, if any, are underway* to address these opportunities and challenges?
- D. *What community arts assets* are you most proud to accentuate (such as programs, events, or displays across architecture, fine arts, traditional crafts, film, etc.)?
- E. *What is the capacity of the community team* – with community and regional partners – to implement the action plan resulting from program participation? Do you have a potential project in mind (not required, but please describe if so)?



AGCI Program Questions:

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*Appalachian Regional Commission Contact:
Molly Theobald, mtheobald@arc.gov*

*National Endowment for the Arts Contact:
Courtney Spearman, spearmanc@arts.gov*

