Fiscal Year 2027 GO Virginia Program Manual

Purpose of the Manual

The GO Virginia Program Manual serves as a comprehensive guide for applicants, regional support organizations, and stakeholders involved in planning, developing, and administering GO Virginia projects. This manual outlines the program's priorities, funding opportunities, eligibility requirements, and administrative processes to help ensure consistent and successful project development across all nine GO Virginia regions.

This manual is intended to be used alongside current Board policies and DHCD guidance documents, which are referenced throughout and included in the appendix where applicable. Applicants are required to consult with their Regional Support Organization early in the process to ensure alignment with regional priorities and to receive technical assistance throughout the application process.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

GO Virginia is a statewide economic development program that brings together businesses, local governments, and regional partners to build stronger, more diverse regional economies. It funds collaborative projects that support private-sector growth in key traded industry clusters.

The program encourages regional cooperation and long-term strategies. GO Virginia focuses on industries that compete nationally or globally—such as advanced manufacturing, IT, and life sciences—based on each region's Growth & Diversification Plan.

To achieve the program goals, the GO Virginia State Board has created nine regional councils. These councils are responsible for developing regional Growth and Diversification Plans and for implementing them by submitting project applications. Applications approved at the regional level are advanced to the GO Virginia State Board for funding.

The GO Virginia State Board has identified four primary investment strategies to achieve the program goals. The program's funding priorities are as follows:

- Talent Development
- Site Development & Infrastructure
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation
- Cluster Scale-Up

1.2 GO VIRGINIA STATE BOARD (STATE BOARD)

The GO Virginia State Board is the statewide governing body that oversees the Virginia Growth and Opportunity (GO Virginia) program. Established in state law, the Board is responsible for overseeing the GO Virginia Fund and ensuring that funded projects align with the program's mission.

State Board Key Roles and Responsibilities:

- Designates GO Virginia and certifies regional councils
- Receives and assesses applications for GO Virginia grant awards submitted by regional councils.
- Establishes statewide policies, investment priorities, and grant funding guidelines.
- Approves funding allocations for both regional and competitive grants.
- Monitors program performance and ensures alignment with Virginia's economic goals.

- Oversees the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in its role as the program's administering agency.

View the full list of GO Virginia State Board Policies on the DHCD website.

1.3 GO Virginia Regions

GO Virginia is organized into nine regions across the Commonwealth, each guided by a Regional Council made up of business, education, and government leaders. These regions are designed to reflect how local economies operate across city and county boundaries and to encourage regional collaboration on economic development strategies. Visit the DHCD website to see the full list of GO Virginia regions and localities

Each Regional Council is responsible for:

- Representing key sectors by bringing forward the perspectives of business, education, workforce, local government, and community organizations.
- Encouraging council members to engage actively in meetings, strategic planning sessions, and relevant committee work.
- Developing a Growth & Diversification Plan that identifies priority industry sectors and strategies.
- Advance regional goals by participating in strategic decision-making and contributing to the development of regional priorities.
- Recommend and approve projects that align with the region's Growth and Diversification Plan and GO Virginia funding requirements.



2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Successful Go Virginia projects must meet the definition of a “regional activity”. The Code of Virginia (§ 2.2-2489) defines a "regional activity" as an economic or talent development-focused collaborative project or program that is:

- Endorsed by a Regional Council;
- Aligned with the region’s Growth and Diversification Plan; and
- Executed by two or more localities, political subdivisions, or public bodies corporate and politic within the region.

Projects must also be aligned with one or more of the program’s investment strategies; Talent Development, Sites and Infrastructure, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, or Cluster Scale Up.

Regional collaboration should involve active participation in both the development and implementation of the project. Collaboration may be demonstrated through joint leadership or co-application by multiple localities; shared funding commitments or in-kind contributions; regional strategies that align with each participating locality’s economic goals; or cross-jurisdictional initiatives.

Applications should include clear evidence of one or more of the following:

- Joint project development or shared governance (e.g., steering committee participation)
- Cash or in-kind contributions from multiple localities or regional entities

- A formal cost-sharing structure or agreement to manage regional investments (e.g., a RIFA agreement, MOU, or some form of a regional agreement between partners)

For additional details on how to meet this requirement, refer to the Administrative Guidance - Regional Collaboration and Local Participation.

GO Virginia funds must support new and expanded efforts — not ongoing operations. Funding cannot be used to continue, sustain, or supplement the operating costs of existing programs. Projects must clearly demonstrate added value and represent new activity that advances GO Virginia's mission. Proposals must fill a documented gap, scale a proven model, or introduce a new approach that supports regional priorities.

GO Virginia is not an economic development incentive program and may not be used to provide direct or exclusive benefits to a single entity, or to fund activities that would directly support the operations, revenue, or growth of a single for-profit entity.

2.1 Eligible Applicants

Local government entities or organizations working on behalf of the participating local government entities are eligible to apply for a GO Virginia grant. Eligible organizations may include regional government entities, nonprofit organizations, regional economic development organizations, regional chambers of commerce, planning district commissions, and colleges and universities.

A non-profit organization may not apply for or receive GO Virginia funding for any project that primarily or directly benefits an affiliated for-profit entity. This includes situations where the non-profit and for-profit share ownership, leadership, or governance. Such relationships are considered a direct incentive to a single entity and are therefore ineligible for GO Virginia funding.

3. GO Virginia Grant Opportunities

3.1 Funding sources

GO Virginia grant opportunities are supported by two funding pools, the Regional Per Capita Fund and Competitive Fund. The Regional Per Capita Fund is allocated to regions annually by the State Board based on a region's population. There are no established limits on maximum awards for implementation projects from either source.

- Regional Per Capita Funds – Funds reserved for specific projects in each region, based on its share of the state population. Per capita funds may be used for planning (up to

$100K per award with a $250K limit per region) and implementation projects.

- Competitive Funds – Funds competitively awarded on the basis of economic impact and outcomes without regard to a region's population. This includes interregional or single-region projects with expected high economic impact and outcomes. Competitive Funds may be used for planning (up to $250K per award) and implementation projects.

Visit the DHCD website to view a full listing of regional and statewide funding allocations.

3.2 GRANT CATEGORIES

GO Virginia offers multiple grant categories under each funding source, designed to support projects at different stages of development and scale. Each funding source supports distinct grant categories. The table below summarizes the grant categories, their general purpose, and links to applicable guidelines.

Funding Source	Grant Category	Purpose	Link to Grant Guidance
Regional Per Capita Fund	Planning, Feasibility and Small-Scale Pilot Grants	For early-stage activities such as research, strategy development, and pilot projects.	Planning, Feasibility and Small-Scale Pilot Guidance
	Implementation	For projects ready to launch, scale, and deliver measurable outcomes like job creation or business expansion	Per Capita Implementation Guidance
	Sites Planning and Implementation	Supports the development of industrial sites through the identification of new sites, initiation of due diligence activities, and/or infrastructure enhancements to help advance sites through the 5-level tiered system of the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP)	Sites & Infrastructure Development Project Guidance
	Broadband Infrastructure		Broadband Infrastructure Project Guidance

Competitive Fund	Planning	Supports collaborative, cross-region efforts to develop a shared strategy and actionable roadmap for a future multi-regional implementation project with significant economic impact. Projects are competitively scored and must achieve at least 75 out of 100 points.	Competitive Fund Guidance
	Implementation	Supports high-impact implementation projects involving two or more regions, or large-scale single-region initiatives with significant economic impact. Projects are competitively scored and must achieve at least 75 out of 100 points.	

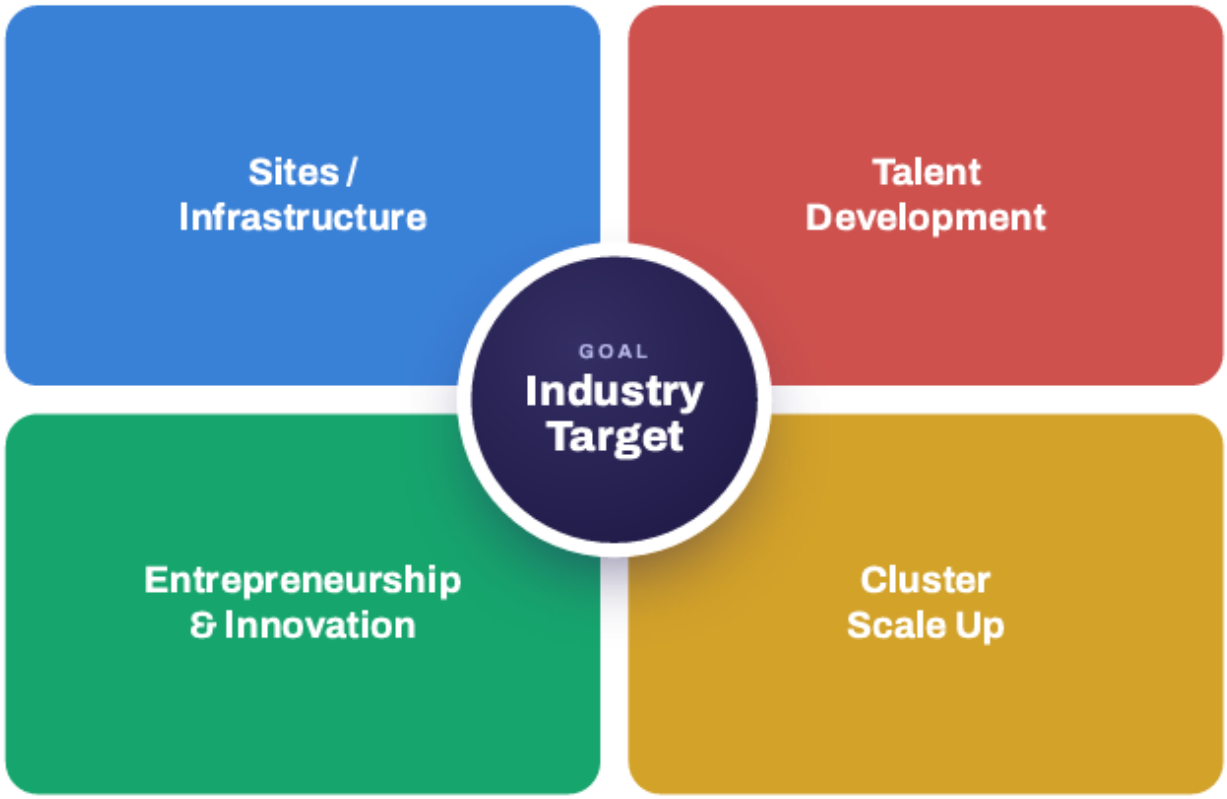
4. Program Investment Strategies

The four priority investment strategies are:

- **Talent Development** – building talent pipelines aligned with business needs that increase the pool of qualified workers
- **Site Development & Infrastructure** – preparing a regional portfolio of business-ready sites that attract private investment
- **Entrepreneurship & Innovation** – creating a resource-rich environment for scalable start-ups and early-stage companies
- **Cluster Scale-Up** – helping existing regional industries grow and compete at a larger scale

The project development framework illustration demonstrates the holistic approach of the program. Projects should be aligned with regional Growth and Diversification plans, develop new capacity and assets, and improve alignment of regional assets to support the growth of an industry cluster and economic competitiveness the region.

Project Development Framework



All GO Virginia projects should be driven by demonstrated industry demand and engagement within the targeted industry cluster. Industry engagement is essential to ensure that projects are aligned with real market demand and result in measurable economic outcomes.

Strong applications clearly demonstrate that industry partners have played an active role in shaping the project and are committed to its success. Meaningful industry engagement may include participation in a leadership or advisory role in project design and implementation, Financial or resource contributions, or commitments to hire program participants, expand operations, or utilize project deliverables.

Successful projects should align with at least one of these investment strategies and demonstrate a clear connection to a region's Growth & Diversification Plan. The investment strategies are outlined below:

4.1 Talent Development

The primary goal of GO Virginia workforce investments is to increase/align system capacity to increase the pool of qualified workers to support priority traded sector industries identified by

Regional Councils in their Growth and Diversification Plans, and, if available, be informed by the region's Talent Pathways Planning Initiative (TPPI) recommendations or other regional talent development strategies.

Talent development projects must respond directly to documented employer demand and increase the number of qualified workers. Eligible workforce projects must prepare individuals for high-demand, traded-sector occupations and provide a clear pathway to job placement or advancement aligned with employer needs.

Applicants should provide quantitative and qualitative data supporting how the project will address the unmet and/or emerging needs of the identified priority industry sector(s).

Projects should focus on:

- Aligning training programs with the needs of Virginia employers
- Attracting and retaining talent, including from outside the region
- Addressing skills gaps identified by regional employers
- Preparing workers for sustainable, higher-paying jobs in traded industry sectors

GO Virginia encourages applicants to secure partnerships with private-sector employers. Projects are strongest when they include:

- Financial or resource commitments from industry partners
- Pledges to hire graduates, host internships, and sponsor apprentices
- Evidence of long-term industry demand for the skills and credentials being delivered

Supported Activities

The following activities are eligible for GO Virginia funding under this investment strategy and should directly support the region's targeted industry sectors.

New or Expanded Skills Training Programs:
GO Virginia can fund the development and launch of new, high-demand training programs that do not currently exist in the region. Projects may also expand or scale existing programs that are proven and align with employer needs.

This grant program is designed to support training activities that will lead directly to employment in specific occupations. For this reason, only **occupational skills training**—training that provides the technical, job-specific competencies required for a particular career pathway—is considered an allowable use of funds. Grant funds must be used exclusively for the development or expansion of training programs that equips participants with technical knowledge, certifications, and hands-on training required to enter and advance in targeted occupations.

Work-Based Learning Opportunities:

Projects that provide students or job seekers with real-world work experience and connect Virginia-based businesses with qualified talent—such as paid internships, apprenticeships, or other hands-on learning opportunities—are closely aligned with GO Virginia's goals. These experiences should be designed to strengthen connections to employment opportunities in one or more of the Region's priority industry sectors.

Internships may be structured as an Academic Internship or Employer Internship.

Academic Internship

- Connected to a school, college, or university.
- Usually taken for academic credit.
- Often requires learning objectives, faculty oversight, and assignments or reflections.
- Focus is on helping students apply classroom learning in a real-world setting.
- May have specific requirements for hours, tasks, or supervision to meet academic standards.
- Students are paid a stipend by the academic institution.

Employer Internships

- Set up directly with a company or organization (not tied to a school).
- Typically focused on workplace experience, skill-building, and contributing to the employer's needs.
- Usually does not include academic credit or faculty involvement.
- Requirements vary by employer rather than by an academic program.
- Compensation is tied to employment status and hours worked.
- Interns are paid a wage by the employer.

Applicants are encouraged to partner with Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs approved by the U.S. Department of Labor or the Virginia State Apprenticeship Agency. While both registered and nonregistered apprenticeships can offer valuable workbased learning, this grant program strongly prefers Registered Apprenticeships because they follow federally approved training standards that ensure consistency, quality, and employer engagement and provide greater transparency, reliability, and long term value for grant investments.

As a result, applications that include training through a registered apprenticeship program will receive priority during review. Nonregistered apprenticeships may still be eligible if they meet all program requirements, but applicants must show that the training quality, structure, and measurable outcomes are comparable to those of registered programs.

Internship should not count towards the jobs created or jobs placed GO Virginia Core Outcome.

Registered Apprenticeships

- Registered Apprenticeships follow federally approved training standards that ensure consistency, quality, and employer engagement.
- RAs include documented on-the-job training, related technical instruction, and progressive wage increases tied to demonstrated skill gains.
- Participants who complete an RA receive a nationally recognized credential that is portable across employers and states.
- RA programs offer enhanced reporting, accountability, and quality assurance, supporting stronger program outcomes for both participants and funders.
- Because RA programs meet established state and federal criteria, they provide greater transparency, reliability, and long-term value for grant investments.

Additional information about Registered Apprenticeships in Virginia, including approved programs and employer resources, is available at:
Virginia Works - Virginia's Workforce Development Agency

Career Exploration in 6th-12th Grade Initiatives: GO Virginia supports initiatives that strengthen the connection between secondary education and career opportunities in Virginia's high-wage, traded industry sectors. Projects focused on grades 6 through 12 are eligible when they help students explore targeted careers, gain industry exposure, earn industry-recognized credentials, and support transition into postsecondary education or direct employment. Examples include expanding dual enrollment course opportunities, industry-recognized credential programs, and work-based learning experiences that are directly aligned with employer needs. Programs that allow students to earn industry-recognized credentials or seamlessly enter a community college or workforce training program are particularly well aligned with GO Virginia's goals; however, GO Virginia does not fund the cost of individual student certification exams.

Talent Development Outcomes

Projects aligned with the Talent Development strategy are expected to strengthen regional talent pipelines, address skills gaps, and support job placement in high-demand occupations within traded sectors. These projects often involve partnerships between industry, education, and workforce providers.

Applicants should clearly define outcome targets in their proposal and ensure alignment with employer needs and the region's Growth & Diversification Plan. Proposals must demonstrate a clear, measurable path to one or more core performance outcomes.

Core performance outcomes for talent development projects include:

- **Number of people trained**
  Number of individuals who successfully complete a course or combination of courses required to enter employment.

- **Number of job placements**
  Total number of new jobs stemming from successful exits from a workforce program.
- **Number of businesses served**
  The number of unique firms provided with targeted and/or individualized business assistance.
- **Number of new interns placed**
  An internship is defined as a professional learning experience hosted by an employer that offers meaningful, practical work related to a student's field of study or career interest. For the purposes of this program, new internships must have a pay or stipend component. This metric tracks the number of students who have been successfully placed into an internship as a result of the project.
- **Number of new apprenticeships created**
  An apprenticeship is a structured employment/training arrangement, hosted by a sponsoring employer. It may be registered or unregistered but must include a combination of paid employment and related academic or on-the-job instruction.
- **Number of new programs implemented**
  The number of new workforce training programs put in place as a result of project activities.
- **Number of credentials awarded**
  A credential is a certificate, degree, or certification generally recognized by employers as evidence that a completer is qualified for work in a specific occupation.
- **Number of students that completed a dual enrollment program**
  Number of high school students who are enrolled dually in a community college-level course and completed it.

4.2 Site Development & Infrastructure

GO Virginia supports site development and middle-mile broadband infrastructure projects that help regions develop a competitive portfolio of sites suitable for new or expanding businesses in one or more targeted traded sectors.

Generally, sites with a minimum of 25 contiguous acres are eligible. Waivers may be considered for sites of regional significance or those within established industrial parks.

GO Virginia encourages applicants to align their site investments with the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP) administered by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). Sites are scored using a five-tier readiness system developed by VEDP, with higher tiers reflecting greater marketability. GO Virginia investments should help move sites up this scale or make Tier 4–5 sites more competitive to attract private investment.

Sites and Infrastructure Project Types:

- **Site Planning Projects**: Funded projects may include early-stage work such as identifying and evaluating potential sites (especially those not already reviewed by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership) or creating agreements between partners to share the costs and benefits of future site development. The goal of these planning projects is to provide clear recommendations to move a site closer to readiness for business investment. *NOTE: Site Planning Projects do NOT count towards a Region's planning grant cap.*
- **Site Implementation Projects**: GO Virginia supports projects that improve a site's readiness for business development. These implementation grants can fund both soft costs (such as site studies, due diligence, engineering, and permitting) and hard costs (such as infrastructure improvements, such as roads or utilities). Projects must help prepare a site for future business use in alignment with the region's targeted industry sectors. Projects must commit to marketing and developing the site as described in the application.

Grant funds may not be used for:

  - Property acquisition
  - Demolition of existing buildings
  - Site remediation
  - New construction or capital improvements to existing buildings on site

Applications should:

- Align Projects with Regional Plans: Ensure projects support the region's Growth and Diversification Plan and VEDP's site readiness goals.
- Demonstrate Regional Collaboration: Projects must involve at least two localities and may include partnerships through Regional Industrial Facility Authorities (RIFAs) or an equivalent revenue-sharing model.
- Focus on Tier Advancement: Prioritize activities that move sites to higher VBRSP tiers, enhancing their marketability.
- Engage Private Sector: Collaborate with private entities to leverage additional resources and expertise.

Site Development & Infrastructure Outcomes

Projects aligned with the Site and Infrastructure Development strategy are expected to prepare land and infrastructure that support private-sector investment and business attraction.

Outcomes should reflect improvements in site readiness, infrastructure, or regional collaboration.

Core performance outcomes for Site Development & Infrastructure projects include:

- **Number of acres advanced to a higher tier per the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP)**
  Number of acres moved to a higher tier level on the VBRSP scale program. Go to https://www.vedp.org/vbrsp for more information on the VBRSP program.
- **For sites not advancing to a higher tier, number of acres impacted/developed**
  The number of acres that the infrastructure improvements will impact. This outcome differs from the number of acres advanced to a higher tier in that it tracks the number of acres impacted by projects that increase a site's marketability but do not change the site's tiering.
- **Number of increased locality engagement in establishing Regional Industrial Facility Authority (RIFA) and/or a revenue sharing agreement**
  The localities that are involved in a Regional Industrial Facility Authority (RIFA) or other shared revenue agreement. This could also include discussions among localities about developing a RIFA.
- **Number of linear feet of water infrastructure**
  The total number of linear feet of water lines and supporting infrastructure improvements.
- **Number of linear feet of gas infrastructure installed**
  The total number of linear feet of gas lines and supporting infrastructure improvements.
- **Number of linear feet of sewer infrastructure**
  The total number of linear feet of sewer lines and supporting infrastructure improvements.
- **Number of miles of middle-mile broadband completed**
  The total number of fiber and/or conduit, which extend telecommunication networks in partnerships with the private sector and focus on meeting the business needs of a community.

Outcomes should correspond to the specific activities proposed. Applicants are encouraged to consult with their Regional Support Organization and VEDP to set appropriate targets.

Regional Broadband Infrastructure Projects: GO Virginia supports broadband initiatives that enhance regional economic development by expanding access to high-speed internet infrastructure. Specifically, GO Virginia funds may be used to support the development of middle-mile broadband infrastructure, such as fiber and conduit, that extends

telecommunications networks to serve the region's business and workforce needs. These projects must be designed in partnership with the private sector and should strengthen the region's ability to attract and retain businesses, support remote work, and expand access to training or educational resources.

*GO Virginia does not fund last-mile broadband projects intended solely for residential access.

Related Guidance:

Regional Site Development Project Guidance

Regional Broadband Infrastructure Project Guidance

Related Board Policies:

Board Policy #9 – Use of GO Virginia Funds for Site Development Investments

4.3 Entrepreneurship & Innovation

GO Virginia supports projects that help regions build a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem — the network of programs, partnerships, and resources that enable startups and innovative businesses to launch, grow, and thrive.

Strong ecosystems combine the infrastructure (like accelerators, incubators, and shared workspaces) and the support systems (such as mentorship, access to capital, and commercialization assistance) that entrepreneurs need to succeed. GO Virginia funds can be used to establish or expand these ecosystem elements that support companies in targeted traded industry sectors.

Projects should be regionally coordinated and designed to:

- Address gaps in the region's startup support landscape.
- Create sustainable tools or programming for entrepreneurs.
- Increase new business formation, scale-up activity, or investment.
- Strengthen collaboration between the public, private, and higher education sectors.
- Attract early-stage seed funding/capital.
- Assist in integration of entrepreneurs into existing supply chains.

To be competitive, proposals must align with the region's Growth & Diversification Plan. Applications should demonstrate a clear pathway to long-term sustainability beyond the initial GO Virginia investment. When applicable, projects should also align with the Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative plan. Copies of these plans are available on your region's page on the DHCD website.

Supported Activities:

The following activities are eligible for GO Virginia funding under this investment strategy and should directly support the region's targeted industry sectors. These activities provide targeted services that increase business readiness, accelerate growth, and improve access to capital.

Startup Support Infrastructure: GO Virginia supports the development of spaces and programs that give entrepreneurs the tools, resources, and environment they need to start and grow businesses. These efforts may include accelerators, incubators, innovation hubs, and other physical or virtual infrastructure that help early-stage companies access mentorship, workspace, and support services. Projects should be aligned with the region's priority industry sectors and designed to expand the region's long-term capacity to support new business formation.

Business Accelerators and Pre-Accelerators:
Business accelerators and pre-accelerators are structured programs that support entrepreneurs through mentorship, education, and business development. Pre-accelerators focus on early-stage ideas and first-time founders, while accelerators provide more advanced support such as coaching, pitch preparation, investor access, and peer learning opportunities.

Business Incubators:
Business incubators are physical spaces that provide co-working areas and wraparound support services to help startups grow. These services often include business planning, market research, customer discovery, and connections to funding sources or investors.

Entrepreneurial Talent & Mentorship:
A strong ecosystem connects entrepreneurs with experienced mentors and industry leaders. GO Virginia funds can support programs that embed seasoned entrepreneurs in key institutions, establish professional mentor networks, or facilitate peer learning and cross-sector relationships that help founders navigate the challenges of launching and scaling businesses.

Entrepreneur-in-Residence Programs:
Initiatives that embed experienced entrepreneurs within incubators, accelerators, or ecosystem hubs to mentor and guide startup founders.

Industry & Mentor Networks:
Industry and mentor networks are organized groups of experts who offer industry-specific insights, peer learning opportunities, and access to specialized support services. These networks also foster cross-industry collaboration and strengthen public-private partnerships.

Workshops & Training:
Workshops and training programs provide entrepreneurship-focused education on topics like business formation, legal and HR compliance, fundraising, and branding. These programs may include bootcamps or cohort-based courses tailored to the region's priority industry sectors.

Ideation & Proof of Concept (POC) Support:
Ideation and proof of concept (POC) support helps entrepreneurs test and validate whether their ideas are viable and ready for market. These activities may include expert technical reviews, product testing, user feedback, and market feasibility assessments.

Large-Scale Ecosystem Investments

GO Virginia may also fund high-impact collaborations between universities, industry, and the public sector that create long-term infrastructure for entrepreneurship. These may include innovation districts or large-scale partnerships that drive regional innovation, support commercialization, and build new capacity to serve early-stage businesses across multiple sectors.

Innovation Hubs:
Innovation hubs are programming-driven environments that bring together entrepreneurs, researchers, and businesses to accelerate the commercialization of intellectual property, startup formation, and cross-sector collaboration. Projects may include shared lab or coworking spaces only when paired with services such as training, mentorship, access to capital, incubation, and industry partnerships. Physical space investments alone are not eligible without a clear, sustained programming strategy.

Innovation Districts:
An **innovation district** is a geographically defined area designed to foster collaboration among varied innovation-driven entities—such as research institutions, startups, established companies, and incubators—while integrating work, living, and recreational spaces. Physical space investments alone are not eligible unless accompanied by a clear, sustained strategy for programming and economic development.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation Outcomes

Projects aligned with the Entrepreneurship & Innovation investment strategy should aim to strengthen the region's startup ecosystem by supporting new business creation, business support services, commercialization, and access to capital.

Core performance outcomes for Entrepreneurship & Innovation projects include:

- **Number of jobs created**
  The number of jobs that will be created by businesses supported by the effort.
- **Number of existing businesses expanded**
  The total number of existing businesses or startups that have demonstrated business growth specifically due to the effort.

- **Number of new businesses created**
  The number of new businesses that were created as part of the effort. A new business is official when it has a license or permit to operate.
- **Number of businesses served**
  Number of unique firms provided with targeted and/or individualized business assistance.
- **Number of new mentors providing business assistance**
  The number of mentors who participated in the effort. A mentor is an individual who provides advice or coaching on starting/growing a business.
- **Total funds raised by businesses served**
  The total dollar amount in funds raised by the businesses served as part of the effort. This may include venture capital, research and development funds, SBIR funding, grants, private investment, or other sources of funds to be used by the businesses served.
- **Number of new products released to production**
  The total number of new products created by a business/startup served as part of the effort that are released to production.
- **Number of patents filed**
  The number of patents filed as a result of the effort. A patent is a type of intellectual property that gives its owner the legal right to exclude others from making, using, or selling an invention for a limited period of years in exchange for publishing an enabling public disclosure of the invention.
- **Number of patents awarded**
  The number of patents awarded as a result of the effort. A patent is a type of intellectual property that gives its owner the legal right to exclude others from making, using, or selling an invention for a limited period of years in exchange for publishing an enabling public disclosure of the invention.

Projects are not expected to produce all listed outcomes. Applicants should select and report on the metrics that are most relevant to their project activities.

4.4 CLUSTER SCALE-UP

GO Virginia supports projects that help existing businesses scale and strengthen targeted industry clusters within a region. Cluster scale-up focuses on second-stage companies and emerging industry subclusters that are positioned for growth, commercialization, expanded production, and market expansion.

These projects help regions strengthen industry competitiveness by supporting activities such as:

- Retooling or expanding production capacity
- Strengthening regional supply chains
- Expanding access to capital, workforce, or specialized infrastructure
- Connecting firms to new markets, customers, or supplier networks

Eligible projects must align with the region's targeted industry sectors and demonstrate how the proposed activities will generate broader regional economic benefits, such as business expansion, job creation, supplier growth, or increased industry competitiveness. Projects focused solely on the expansion of a single company without broader regional benefit are not eligible

GO Virginia may also support efforts to accelerate emerging or nascent industries that are new to the region or in early stages of commercialization. These projects should be collaborative and demonstrate the same high standards for impact, job creation, and return on investment as other implementation projects.

Supported Activities

Business Accelerators (for Second-Stage Companies):
Business accelerators support growth-stage companies that have moved beyond the startup phase and are preparing to scale operations, commercialize products, expand production, or enter new markets. Activities may include access to mentors, investors, technical assistance, peer learning networks, and connections to customers, suppliers, and commercialization resources.

Second-Stage Growth Programs:
These programs support established companies seeking to increase competitiveness, expand operations, improve production capacity, adopt new technologies, or access new domestic or global markets. Projects should focus on helping firms overcome barriers to scale and contribute to broader regional economic growth.

Research and Development Partnerships
R&D partnerships connect businesses with universities, research institutions, and industry partners to accelerate innovation, technology adoption, and commercialization. Activities may include applied research collaborations, product development, manufacturing modernization, prototyping, testing, and industry-academia technology transfer initiatives.

Supply Chain & Industry Network Initiatives
These initiatives strengthen regional industry ecosystems by improving supplier networks, identifying supply chain gaps, and increasing coordination among firms, manufacturers, distributors, and service providers. Activities may include industry consortium development, supplier-connection platforms, logistics coordination, or shared-infrastructure strategies.

Cluster Intelligence & Transition Strategies (Planning)
These projects help regions better understand and strengthen targeted industry sectors through economic analysis, labor market assessments, supply chain mapping, commercialization assessments, and industry competitiveness studies. Projects should produce actionable strategies to inform future cluster-scale-up investments.

Cluster Pivot Strategies:
These initiatives help regions respond to economic and technological shifts by leveraging existing assets, infrastructure, and workforce capabilities to support emerging industry opportunities. Activities may include transitioning workers from declining industries to high-growth sectors, repositioning regional infrastructure, or developing strategies to support the development of new industry clusters.

Cluster Scale-Up Outcomes

Projects aligned with the Cluster Scale-Up strategy focus on helping existing businesses grow, expanding supply chains, and building capacity within high-potential industry sectors. These projects are expected to strengthen regional economies by accelerating business expansion and attracting investment.

Core performance outcomes for Cluster Scale-Up projects include:

- **Number of jobs created**
  The number of jobs that will be created by businesses supported by the effort.
- **Number of businesses attracted**
  Total number of unique new businesses relocating to the region(s) as a result of the project's work.
- **Number of existing businesses expanded**
  The total number of existing businesses or startups that have demonstrated business growth specifically due to the effort.
- **Number of businesses served**
  The number of unique firms provided with targeted and/or individualized business assistance.
- **Total funds raised by businesses served**
  The total dollar amount in funds raised by the businesses served as part of the effort. This may include venture capital, research and development funds, SBIR funding, grants, private investment, or other sources of funds to be used by the businesses served.

Applicants should work with their Regional Support Organization to identify which outcomes are most relevant to their project and how those outcomes will be measured and tracked.

5. MATCH REQUIREMENTS

GO Virginia operates as a cost-sharing program, meaning grant funds must be matched with non-state resources to demonstrate local and regional investment in the project's success. A strong match demonstrates regional partners' commitment to the project and the initiative's sustainability after the grant period.

All GO Virginia grants require cost sharing through commitment of non-state matching funds. Projects must provide a 2:1 total match, meaning that for every $2 of GO Virginia funds requested, at least $1 of non-state match must be secured.

This match can include cash or in-kind contributions from local governments, regional partners, educational institutions, private industry, federal sources, or philanthropic contributions. State general or non-general funds are not eligible for use as match.

While GO Virginia does not mandate a strict match formula for every line item, certain budget categories are typically expected to reflect a *true cost share* between GO Virginia and local partners. Examples of budget items where a true cost share is expected include:

- Salaries or contracted staff
- Internship and/or apprenticeship stipends or wages (a 50% cost share is required)

This match can include cash or in-kind contributions from local governments, regional partners, educational institutions, private industry, federal sources, or philanthropic contributions. State general or non-general funds are not eligible for use as match.

Local Match

The State Board requires that a portion of the match must be contributed by the participating localities (Local Match). The required local match varies by grant type and is outlined in the table that follows.

Local Match strengthens the project's alignment with regional priorities and showcases local stakeholder engagement. The local contribution may come from any combination of the participating localities within a region, such as:

- Cities
- Counties
- Towns
- School Divisions
- Economic Development Authority, Industrial Development Authority
- Regional Organizations (i.e., Regional Industrial Facility Authority, Regional Economic Development Organization, Planning District Commission, Regional Airport Commission) contributing non-state resources on behalf of their member localities.

In certain circumstances, applicants may request a waiver for the local match requirement. Such requests must be submitted by the Regional Council on the applicant's behalf and will be considered by the GO Virginia State Board. Waiver requests should demonstrate that localities are unable to provide the required contribution, supported by evidence such as high fiscal stress levels or documented efforts to solicit support from participating localities. Refer to the Match Guidance linked at the end of this section to read more about local match waivers.

Match Requirements by Project Type

GO VIRGINIA MATCH REQUIREMENTS		
Project Type	**Total Match Requirement**	**Local Match Requirement**
Regional Per Capita - Planning, Pilot, and Feasibility	2:1	No Local Match Required
Regional Per Capita - Implementation	2:1	20% Local Match Required
Regional Pe Capita - Sites Planning	2:1	No Local Match Required
Regional Per Capita - Sites Implementation	2:1	20% Local Match Required
Regional Per Capita - Broadband Planning	2:1	No Local Match Required
Regional Per Capita - Broadband Implementation	2:1	20% Local Match Required
Competitive Fund - Planning	2:1	20% Local Match Required
Competitive Fund - Implementation	2:1	20% Local Match Required

Eligible Sources of Match

Matching contributions can be cash or in-kind.

Cash Match: Direct monetary contributions allocated specifically for the project.

In-Kind Match: Non-cash contributions that provide value to the project, such as

- Equipment
- Facilities
- Personnel (salary/fringe)

- Volunteer time
- Consultant services
- Training
- Waived fees, unrecovered indirect costs
- Site acquisition/development

As the in-kind match relates to personnel (salary/fringe) and volunteer time there should be a distinct difference. To verify an hourly rate, first confirm where the number comes from and whether it is appropriate for the type of work:

- **General volunteer labor** should use Independent Sector's published annual rate. This applies to participation on advisory groups where skilled or professional services are NOT provided to support the project. https://independentsector.org/research/value-of-volunteer-time/
- **Skilled or professional services** must use market-based rates, not the general volunteer rate. The nature of the services should be described in a scope of work that details what services are being provided and the details provided of the services rendered at the time of submitting a remittance.
  Example: Taproot Foundation's pro bono valuation (avg **$220/hr**) is appropriate for professional-level work. https://taprootfoundation.org/tools/pro-bono-valuation/
- **Internal staff time used as match** must use **the same hourly rate your organization pays employees for similar work**, including fringe benefits if required .

5.1 Documentation of Match

Applicants must submit a Match Verification Form for each source of match at the time of application. All match expenditures must be documented and submitted as part of the reimbursement process. After the project closes, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) may conduct a financial review to verify that the contracted match amount has been fully met. This process ensures compliance with GO Virginia program guidelines and proper use of funds.

5.2 Match Conditions and Restrictions

- **Exclusive Use**: Match contributions must be exclusive to the GO Virginia project and cannot be used to satisfy the matching requirements of any other grant program. Contributions that have already been applied to or are intended to be applied to another grant's match requirements are ineligible for GO Virginia match consideration.

- **Equipment:** Equipment donated by an entity can be applied as match if the donated equipment was purchased no more than 12 months before the State Board approved

the project. In cases where the equipment being donated was purchased more than 12 months before the State Board approved the project, a third-party appraisal of the equipment will be required to demonstrate fair market value. This fair market valuation amount is the amount permitted for the match.

- **Site Investments**: Prior investments in a site may be counted as a match if they meet certain conditions. Generally, costs incurred within the last 24 months by a private landowner, developer, locality, planning district commission, or other public entity may be eligible. These costs must be directly related to the site proposed in the application and may include activities such as due diligence, environmental assessments, infrastructure design, or demolition (for redevelopment sites).

    - In some cases, investments made within the last five years may also be qualified as an eligible match if the applicant can demonstrate that the investments were part of a regular, ongoing site advancement strategy. GO Virginia funds cannot be used for site acquisition, but previous site acquisition costs may count as match if incurred within the eligible timeframes.

- **Scholarships/Tuition:** Tuition paid by enrolled students may not be committed as match. Non-state funds used for the express purpose of paying participants' tuition/enrollment fees for a training program related to a talent development project may be applied as match. This could include local contributions from school divisions to allow students to participate in dual-enrollment courses, private/philanthropic contributions, or federal funding commitments from a local workforce board.

- **Contractors:** Vendors or contractors that are paid, in whole or in part, with GO Virginia funds may not contribute match to the same project, whether in cash or in-kind. This includes providing services at a discounted rate. Vendors and contractors may contribute **in-kind equipment** as match only if:
    - The equipment is not being paid for with GO Virginia funds; and
    - The value of the equipment is supported by a documented third-party appraisal.

  Local government entities are not considered vendors or contractors for the purposes of this restriction.

Administrative Guidance related to Match

Project Match Documentation Guidelines

Forms

Match Verification Form

Local Match Waiver Request Form

Related Board Policies on Match Requirements:

Board Policy #11 – Modified GO Virginia Program Match Requirements – Per Capita Funds

Board Policy #13 – GO Virginia Program Match Requirements – Competitive Fund

5.3 BUDGET & ALLOWABLE COSTS

Applicants are required to submit a detailed budget that outlines how GO Virginia funds will be used to support the proposed project. The budget should align with the project's scope of work and be reasonable, necessary, and clearly tied to the project's deliverables and outcomes. GO Virginia funds are reimbursement-based and must support new activities that directly advance the program's goals. The budget should demonstrate cost-efficiency, leverage matching resources, and follow the principles of sound financial management.

Allowable costs include, but are not limited to:

- **Personnel and Professional Services**: Salaries, fringe benefits, contract services, legal services, and audit costs.
- **Planning and Assessment**: Market and feasibility studies, needs assessments, strategic planning, outreach, and training-related expenses.
- **Engineering and Design**: Architectural and engineering fees, preliminary engineering reports (PER), and preliminary architectural reports (PAR).
- **Construction and Site Development**: Site work, construction related to stormwater management, water and sewer improvements, clearance and demolition.
- **Construction Related to Equipment Installation**: Outfitting space to accommodate HVAC, plumbing, and electrical upgrades for equipment installation.
- **Equipment and Technology**: Purchase of equipment, hardware, software, and telecommunications necessary for implementation.
- **Operational Support**: Rent or lease costs, supplies, indirect costs (per approved 10% rate), and salaries/fringe.
- **Administrative Support:** by the regional support organization for grant management services (up to 8%).
- **Licenses and Fees**: Fees, permits, and required licenses associated with the project.
- **Other Project Costs**: Contingencies, taxes and insurance, travel related to project delivery, and website development.

5.4 Funding Restrictions and Ineligible Activities

Projects are not eligible for funding if they include any of the following:

- Projects in Non-Traded Sectors (unless indicated by the State Board)
- Projects benefiting a single business, not-for-profit entity, or for-profit affiliate of a not-for-profit entity
- Incentives, direct subsidies, or grants to individual companies or single entities. Projects must benefit an entire industry sector, not one employer.
- Construction Projects
- Academic Scholarships and Tuition Subsidies
- K–5 education initiatives
- Last-mile broadband project
- Single-use supplies and/or consumables
- Soft skills training, such as communication, teamwork, customer service, professionalism, or time management, is not eligible for funding under this program.

For more details on funding restrictions, refer to:

Board Policy #4: Use of GO Virginia Funds to Promote the Growth of Traded Industry Clusters
Board Policy #8: Use of GO Virginia Funds for Investment in Broadband

6. Application Process

6.1 Application Timeline and Deadline

GO Virginia applications are developed and submitted through one of nine GO Virginia Regional Councils Each region has its own process and timeline for reviewing applications. Applicants should work closely with their Regional Support Organization to understand regional deadlines, requirements, and approval procedures. While DHCD publishes quarterly deadlines for State Board review, applicants should focus first on meeting their region's internal timeline, which may be several weeks earlier. Visit the DHCD website to view the GO Virginia Program Calendar. The individual applications are included below and linked in the appendix:

- Per Capita Implementation Application
- Per Capita Planning Application
- Site Development Implementation Application
- Site Development Planning Application
- Competitive Implementation Application
- Competitive Planning Application

6.2 Regional Councils Timeline and Deadlines

The designated Regional Support Organizations should be the first point of contact when submitting a project proposal or application. The links below will take you directly to each region's application page, which includes information on regional application deadlines.

Region 1	Region 2	Region 3
Region 4	Region 5	Region 6
Region 7	Region 8	Region 9

6.3 GO Virginia State Board Timeline and Deadline

The GO Virginia State Board meets quarterly to review and approve Per Capita Implementation and Competitive applications submitted through the regional support organizations. Applicants should work closely with their support organization to ensure sufficient time for regional review and approval prior to DHCD submission.

FY 2027 GO Virginia State Board Application Deadlines:

September 15, 2026

December 8, 2026

March 9, 2027

June 8, 2027

6.4 Planning Grant Deadlines

Per Capita Planning Grant application deadlines are on a rolling basis, with eight (8) review deadlines throughout the year. Planning grant requests of less than $100,000 may be reviewed and administratively approved by DHCD.

6.5 Required Application Documents

All GO Virginia applications must include a complete and accurate set of documentation to be considered for review. These materials ensure that DHCD, Regional Councils, and the State Board can evaluate the project's alignment with program priorities, funding requirements, and expected outcomes. Incomplete applications will not advance to the review process.

Submission Instructions

Applications approved by Regional Councils are submitted by the Support Organization (grantee) on behalf of the applicant (subgrantee) into the Centralized Application Management System (CAMS). This is the official platform used by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to manage all GO Virginia applications.

Interested applicants can view the applications on the DHCD website. Direct links to each application are provided in the appendix of this manual.

7. Review and Evaluation Criteria

7.1 Regional Council Review Process Overview

Applicants start by collaborating with their regional Support Organization to create a complete application. Once the proposal is finalized, it is submitted to the Regional Council for review during one of its regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. The Regional Council will review the project and may decide to approve it for submission to the state, reject it, or defer it for further development.

For questions or application information, contact your regional support organization through the links below. Each link will take you to the DHCD website with the latest contact details.

7.2 State Board Review Process

DHCD Staff Review
After each quarterly deadline for Per Capita Implementation and Competitive Fund applications, DHCD staff reviews applications for completeness.

Evaluation Workgroup Review
Once deemed complete, the application is reviewed by a Workgroup composed of:

- Subject matter experts
- Up to two members of the GO Virginia State Board

The workgroup evaluates each project based on GO Virginia's criteria and reaches a consensus recommendation: approve, deny, or defer.

Final Decision by the State Board
All applications, along with the workgroup's recommendation, are presented to the full GO Virginia State Board at its quarterly meeting. The Board makes the final decision on each application.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Each GO Virginia application is reviewed using four core evaluation categories. These categories help ensure funded projects create meaningful measurable economic impact and align with the program's strategic goals.

Economic Impact:
Alignment with the region's Growth and Diversification Plan, and overall potential to deliver tangible economic results.

Strong proposals demonstrate:

- Clear impact on one or more of the region's targeted industry sectors.
- Non-state, including private-sector investment, leveraged because of the project.
- A demonstrated economic impact based on the applicant's committed outcomes.
- Realistic, data-informed projections for outcomes such as job growth, credentials awarded, or infrastructure readiness.

Regional Collaboration:
This category evaluates the level and quality of participation by local governments and regional partners, as well as the type and amount of match committed to the project. Applications should demonstrate how well the project brings together cross-sector partners to address shared priorities and whether the proposed match contributions reflect broad regional commitment.

Strong proposals demonstrate:

- Meaningful involvement from two or more localities, not just letters of support.
- Active collaboration with educational institutions, workforce partners, economic development organizations, and private-sector stakeholders.
- Financial and in-kind match contributions from a diverse group of partners, including local governments, higher education, and employers.
- Coordination that serves regional—not just local—goals, and benefits multiple stakeholders.

Projects that demonstrate strong, sustained regional partnerships—and leverage local or private resources effectively—are more likely to be successful.

Project Readiness:
This category evaluates whether the applicant and project partners are fully prepared to launch and manage the project successfully. Reviewers will assess whether the project is ready to begin implementation upon approval—or if there are unresolved inefficiencies that could delay success.

Strong proposals demonstrate:

- A clear and achievable project plan, with timelines and defined quarterly milestones.
- Well-defined roles and responsibilities among project partners.
- Prerequisite activities (such as planning, permitting, or pilot work) have been completed or are underway.
- Match funding is secured, and required documentation is included.
- A realistic assessment of potential barriers or risks, along with plans to address them.

Project Sustainability:
This category evaluates whether the project has a clear and realistic plan to sustain its impact after GO Virginia funding ends. Reviewers will assess whether the applicant has thought through what happens after the grant ends and whether the project's outcomes will continue delivering value to the region over time.

Strong proposals demonstrate:

- A defined strategy for continuing operations, programming, or services beyond the grant period.
- Identification of long-term funding sources, business models, or partnerships to support sustainability.
- A plan for how the project's benefits will be maintained, scaled, or replicated in the region.
- Avoidance of creating new ongoing obligations for the state or local governments without a plan to support them.

Sustainability is a key factor in ensuring GO Virginia investments lead to lasting, region-wide economic benefits.

Competitive Implementation and Planning Application Scoring Rubric
All applications received for the Competitive Fund are scored based on a scoring rubric adopted by the GO Virginia State Board. Applications must score 75 points (out of 100) or better to access this fund. View the scoring rubric on DHCD website.

8.1 Notification of Award

Once a project is approved by the GO Virginia State Board, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will issue a formal Notice of Award. This notice serves as the official confirmation the project has been approved for GO Virginia funding and is ready to move into the contracting phase.

9. Grant Agreement and Compliance

9.1 Grant Award Process

Once approved by DHCD (planning grant requests of less that $100,000) or the GO Virginia State Board, DHCD will initiate a grant contract. This contract is developed in collaboration with the Regional Support Organization (grantee) and the applicant (subgrantee).

The contract includes all key terms and expectations for the project, such as:

- Scope of work
- Approved project activities
- Budget and match commitments
- Performance outcomes and reporting requirements
- Milestones
- Compliance and documentation standards

DHCD staff will guide the grantee and subgrantee teams through the contracting process to ensure all parties understand their responsibilities before project work begins

9.2 Reporting Requirements

All GO Virginia projects are required to submit quarterly progress reports during the grant period. These reports help track milestones, identify any issues, and document outcomes as they occur.

The subgrantee is responsible for preparing each report. The regional Support Organization (grantee) will submit the completed report to DHCD in CAMS under the “Reports & Communications” tab. Reporting deadlines are set once the contract is executed and follow the calendar year quarters.

Quarterly reports should include the following:

- Outcomes achieved during the quarter
- Description of any project milestones that have been undertaken
- Any obstacles encountered during project implementation.

The GO Virginia Quarterly Progress Report template must be completed for Planning, Pilot, and Feasibility grants, as well as any Implementation projects.

> *Quarterly Reporting Tips:*
>
> - *Be concise! Reports are intended to be short check-ins. Follow character limits where indicated. The reports are not intended to be a burden - just a way to check in on milestones and outcomes.*
> - *Be transparent! Barriers and surprises can be a part of any project. Clearly explaining potential issues in a timely manner will help with project support further down the line.*
> - *Make sure the correct investment strategy is selected when you submit numeric outcomes.*
> - *Make sure to submit only numeric outcomes achieved that quarter; do not submit cumulative outcomes in the quarterly reports.*

9.3 Monitoring and Site Visits

DHCD may conduct an on-site validation visit to verify that funds have been expended in accordance with the grant contract and project budget. Additionally, DHCD may request copies of documents related to how GO Virginia funds are being used. Grantees and subgrantees are expected to provide this information in a timely manner.

9.4 Project Closeout

After a GO Virginia-funded project, the Regional Support Organization (grantee) and the project lead organization (subgrantee) must complete a two-step closeout process that includes a: Fiscal Closeout and Performance Closeout.

Fiscal Closeout

The Fiscal Closeout ensures that all financial aspects of the project are properly documented and concluded. Within 90 days of the project end date (or as specified in the grant contract), the grantee must submit a Fiscal Closeout Report through the Centralized Application and Management System (CAMS). This report should confirm:

- All project activities and milestones outlined in the contract have been completed.
- All remittance requests have been submitted and processed.
- All required financial documentation, including:
    - Contracts obligating GO Virginia funds.

- Procurement policies or descriptions of procurement processes used.
- A signed Certified Financial Closeout Document (Attachment A).

Any unexpended funds will be returned to the appropriate GO Virginia fund allocation.

Performance Closeout

The Performance Closeout documents the outcomes and impacts of the project. It describes how the project achieved its outcomes, how the project applies to the regional Growth and Diversification plan, and the impact that the project had on the region.

DHCD will assign a Performance Closeout Report in CAMS, which the grantee must complete. This report includes:

- A signed Performance Narrative and Certification (Attachment B), detailing:
  - Project background and objectives.
  - Assessment of project impact and alignment with regional Growth and Diversification Plan goals.
  - Statistical data on project outcomes and products.
  - Plans for program continuation and sustainability.
  - Conclusions and recommendations based on project implementation.
- A completed Final Grant Outcomes Reporting Sheet (Attachment C), documenting contracted and achieved outcomes.
- Submission of any deliverables produced during the project (e.g., feasibility studies, market analyses).

A projects performance narrative and certified performance statement must be completed. Grant outcomes are documented and reported according to the outcomes agreed upon in the project contract.

9.5 Request for Extension

In some cases, a project may require additional time beyond the original contract period to complete activities and meet approved outcomes. Grantees and subgrantees may request a contract extension with approval from their Regional Council.

To request an extension, the following is required:

- A clear rationale explaining why the extension is needed.
- What outcomes have been achieved to date.

- An updated set of milestones and remittance plans.

If the Regional Council agrees the extension is appropriate, they will complete and submit the GO Virginia Contract Completion Date Extension Form to DHCD for review and approval.

Extension requests are reviewed by DHCD on a case-by-case basis and must demonstrate that the project remains on track to deliver its intended impact.

10. Financial Management

Upon approval, the budget submitted with the application will be incorporated into the official grant contract and will guide how GO Virginia funds may be used. Grantees and subgrantees are responsible for managing project finances in accordance with the approved budget, GO Virginia guidelines, and any applicable state regulations.

10.1 Payment and Reimbursement Procedures

GO Virginia is a reimbursement-based grant program. This means project expenses must be incurred and paid before any grant funds are disbursed. To receive reimbursement, grantees and subgrantees must follow the process outlined in the GO Virginia Remittance Guidelines and submit complete documentation through CAMS.

- Remittances are required to be submitted on a quarterly basis, and if not the subgrantee is required to explain in their quarterly report why there were not able to submit a remittance this past quarter.
- Remittances typically should provide proof of expense showing the work was completed (i.e., an invoice) and proof of payment (i.e., a canceled check,general ledger, bank statements, etc.).

Subgrantees must submit GO Virginia remittance requests and match documentation quarterly (at a minimum), or at the rate agreed upon in the project contract. A Project Remittance Template should be submitted with all sections complete and with supporting documentation in order of their appearance on the transaction list.

Forms and Templates:

- Project Remittance Template (Excel)
- Staff Time & In-Kind Match Template (Excel)

10.2 Audit and Financial Reporting Requirements

All GO Virginia grantees are required to submit annual financial statements to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). These statements help ensure that grant funds are used appropriately and that financial practices meet basic accountability standards.

Depending on the level of funding and your organization's structure, you may be required to submit one of the following:

- **Basic Financial Statements** (e.g., balance sheet, income statement, cash flow)
- **Reviewed Financial Statements** prepared by an independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
- **Audited Financial Statements** conducted by an independent CPA
- **Single Audit Reports** if your organization spends $750,000 or more in federal funds in a given year

DHCD uses these documents to confirm that public funds are being managed responsibly. Please refer to DHCD's Audit Policy for more detail on what type of report is required for your organization.

10.3 Recordkeeping and Retention

As a GO Virginia grant recipient, you must keep all records related to your project—including financial documents, invoices, reports, and other relevant files. These records should be organized and accessible during the life of the project, and must be kept on file for at least three years after the project has officially closed.

10.4 Budget Management and Modifications

During a project, grantees and subgrantees may determine that a budget revision is necessary to better reflect actual costs or shifting priorities. All budget modifications must first be discussed with the Regional Support Organization and submitted for review.

To revise a project budget:

- The request must be submitted to and approved by the Support Organization
- The Support Organization will consult with DHCD before the request is submitted in CAMS
- The revision must maintain alignment with the project's approved activities and outcomes

Minor adjustments (e.g., shifting funds between categories) may be approved as budget modifications.

If the requested change significantly alters the scope of work or deliverables, the project team may be required to initiate a contract amendment instead of a standard budget revision.

11. Technical Assistance and Resources

Interested applicants can view all program guidance materials, templates, and required documents on the DHCD website.

11.1 Contact Information for Regional Program Staff

Regional support organization information can be found on the DHCD website.

11.2 Contact Information for DHCD Program Staff

DHCD Program staff can be reached at GOVirginia@dhcd.virginia.gov

11.3 List of Funded Projects

A downloadable list of previously funded projects can be found on the DHCD website.

12. Appendix

12.1 Appendix A: Applications

This section provides links to the required question documents associated with each application. Each document also specifies the additional required information that should be included with the application questions.

- Planning Application
- Per Capita Implementation Application
- Site Development Planning Application
- Site Development Implementation Application
- Competitive Implementation Application
- Competitive Planning Application

12.2 Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

Applicant
An entity—typically a local government, planning district commission, economic development organization, or higher education institution—that submits a project proposal for GO Virginia funding.

CAMS (Centralized Application and Management System)
The online system used to submit applications, track contracts, upload reports, and manage grant documentation for GO Virginia projects.

Cluster Scale-Up
An investment strategy focused on helping existing businesses grow, expand supply chains, and strengthen industry clusters in the region.

DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development)
The state agency responsible for administering the GO Virginia program on behalf of the GO Virginia State Board.

Economic Impact
A core evaluation criterion used to measure a project's return on investment, including job creation, business growth, and revenue generated from outside Virginia.

Grantee
The Regional Support Organization that enters into a contract with DHCD and manages the administrative and reporting requirements for the project.

Grant Match
Non-state funding (cash or in-kind) contributed by localities, private partners, or other stakeholders to demonstrate commitment and share project costs. Match is required for all GO Virginia projects unless waived by policy.

GO Virginia State Board (State Board)
A 25-member policymaking board that oversees the funding and strategic direction of the Growth and Opportunity Program.

GO Virginia Regional Council (Regional Council)
A body of local leaders and stakeholders that identifies priorities, reviews applications, and approves projects within each of Virginia's nine GO Virginia regions.

Growth and Diversification Plan
The Growth and Diversification (G&D) Plan is the strategic blueprint developed by each GO Virginia Regional Council to guide regional economic development investments. It identifies the

region's targeted industry clusters, economic challenges, workforce gaps, and opportunities for collaboration among business, education, and government.

In-Kind Match
Non-cash contributions of goods or services that support the project and have a verifiable dollar value.

Locality
A locality refers to a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, specifically a town, city, or county.

Local Match
Local Match is the portion of the Total Match that must come directly from one or more units of local government participating in the project.

Outcome
A measurable result of a project (e.g., jobs created, credentials awarded). All implementation projects must report outcomes quarterly and at closeout.

Performance Closeout
A required process at the end of the grant period that documents what the project achieved, including narrative impact, outcomes, and deliverables.

Regional Per Capita Funds
GO Virginia funds allocated to each region based on population, used for Planning & Feasibility Grants or Implementation Grants.

Planning & Feasibility Grant
Funding used to support early-stage activities like feasibility studies, pilot projects, or strategy development.

Post-Award
The period after a grant is approved and contracted, covering implementation, reporting, reimbursement, and closeout.

Project Readiness
One of the evaluation criteria used to assess whether a project is prepared to launch immediately and has secured the necessary commitments and partners.

Regional Council
A body of local leaders and stakeholders that identifies priorities, reviews applications, and approves projects within one of Virginia's nine GO Virginia regions.

Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative (REI)
The Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative (REI) supported GO Virginia regions in developing strategies and infrastructure to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems. The plans provide actionable strategies to support startups, scale high-growth-potential firms, and address gaps in resources, networks, and support services for entrepreneurs.

Regional Support Organization (Support Organization)
The entity designated by a Regional Council to serve as the fiscal agency and Regional Support Organization. The support organization provides administrative and programmatic support to a Regional Council and post-contract grant management to award recipients (subgrantees).

Remittance
The process of submitting a request for reimbursement of eligible expenses through CAMS, including all required documentation.

Return on Investment (ROI)
A calculation of the fiscal benefit of a project to the Commonwealth compared to the amount of GO Virginia funds requested.

Site Development
An investment strategy focused on preparing business-ready sites and related infrastructure to attract private investment.

Competitive Fund
A GO Virginia funding stream available to high-impact projects involving two or more regions, or to single-region projects that exceed a region's available Per Capita balance.

Subgrantee
The lead organization responsible for carrying out the project. The subgrantee partners with the grantee (Support Organization) to manage the project and submit reports.

Support Organization (Support Org)
The organization that provides administrative and programmatic support to a Regional Council and manages the grant contract with DHCD.

Traded Sector
Industries that produce goods or services sold outside the region or state, thereby bringing new revenue into the region. GO Virginia focuses on projects that serve traded sectors.

Subgrantee
The applicant and lead organization responsible for carrying out a project. The subgrantee partners with the grantee (Support Organization) to manage and direct the project and provides the required reporting and financial reimbursement documentation to the Support Organization for submission to DHCD.

Talent Pathways Planning Initiative (TPPI)
The Talent Pathways Planning Initiative helped GO Virginia regions assess workforce gaps in high-demand, high-wage industries. The plans provided data and strategies to better align education and training with employer needs and support the development of regional workforce projects.

Total Match
Total Match is the full amount of non-state resources that must be committed to a project to meet the program's match requirement. This match can come from a variety of eligible sources, including local governments, businesses, nonprofits, and federal programs, and may include both cash and in-kind contributions.

Traded Sector Industries
A traded industry cluster is defined as the industry sector(s) where many goods and services are sold or have the potential to be sold outside the Commonwealth. For more information on traded sectors, refer to Board Policy #4: Use of GO Virginia Funds to Promote the Growth of Traded Industry Clusters. View a list of each region's priority traded sector industries on the DHCD website.