

Ohio Economic Development Programs



The Montrose Group, LLC

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Ohio Economic Development Programs

The Ohio Department of Development has created this list of economic development programs available for a range of public and private sector clients.

The **Ohio Energy Resources Division** administers the **State Energy Program** and conducts special projects to promote awareness; develop capacity; deploy projects; and provide technical assistance, training, and outreach for renewable energy technologies, alternative fuels infrastructure, energy efficient buildings, fuel cells, and industrial process efficiency.

The **Ohio Job Ready Sites Program** bolsters our state's inventory of development-ready sites served by utility and transportation infrastructure. Sites improved under the program are made ready for future business prospects seeking locations for new or expanding operations. The grants may be used to offset costs traditionally incurred in industrial and commercial site development, from acquisition of real property to utility upgrades to construction build-out of speculative facilities.

The **Alternative Fuel Transportation Grant** improves air quality through grants to businesses, nonprofit organizations, school systems, or local governments for the purchase and installation of alternative fuel, refueling, blending, or distribution facilities and terminals. Current incentives are focused on retail fuel distributors and school systems.

The **Microenterprise Business Development Program** provides funds on a competitive basis to eligible units of local government and nonprofit organizations to assist with the development of local microenterprise businesses. Microenterprises are commonly defined as for-profit entities with fewer than five employees, one of whom owns the business.

The **Minority Business Bonding Program** provides bid, performance, and payment surety bonds to state certified minority-owned businesses that are unable to obtain bonding through standard surety companies.

The **Appalachian Training Investment Partnership Program** assists smaller companies (fewer than 500 employees) in defraying a portion of the costs associated with employee training. The state's General Revenue Fund matches \$250,000 per fiscal year with the federal Appalachia Regional Commission's \$250,000 in funding to assist companies located in any of Ohio's 32 Appalachian counties. Because the Appalachian Training Investment Partnership can be designated as pilot/demonstration projects, pre- and post assessments, pre-employment activities, curriculum development, and consortia-based training projects can be considered for funding.

OhioMeansJobs.com is an employer-driven job matching system that combines job listings from major job boards, newspapers, associations, and company websites to create a comprehensive listing of jobs throughout Ohio. Job seekers can browse through nearly 100,000 employment opportunities by job title, keyword, pay range, and location – all for free. Employers who register through the **Ohio Business Gateway** can also browse



through thousands of resumes for free. Ohio is the first state in the nation to offer free access to a publicly-funded online recruitment system.

The **Appalachian Regional Commission** provides funding allocation that is dedicated to alternative and advanced energy development, telecommunications, entrepreneurship, and asset-based development. Projects that fall under any of these four categories are eligible for funding under the **Regional Initiative Program**.

The **Distressed County** status qualification is based on low per capita income, high rates of poverty, and unemployment. In the past, the distressed county program focused mainly on providing public facilities, clean drinking water, sanitary waste disposal, and human resource projects such as literacy training. In 2000, the Commission created a capacity-building effort and a telecommunications/ information technology initiative. Only applicants in Distressed Counties are eligible for these projects. Funding requests can be provided up to 80 percent of the project cost.

The **Appalachian Regional Commission's Federal Access Road Program** better links the region's businesses, communities, and residents to the Appalachian Development Highway System and to other key parts of the region's transportation network. The program offers a flexible approach designed to meet local needs and provides financing mechanisms to support a variety of economic development opportunities throughout the region.

The Governor's Office of Appalachia **Rapid Response Fund** is for projects that have an immediate need or have a significant job creation component. This fund permits the Governor's Office of Appalachia to respond quickly to projects that will have a significant impact in a short period of time. Eligible applicants are community improvement corporations, port authorities, units of local government, and nonprofit organizations. Rapid Response grants follow the same guidelines as the Appalachia Regional Commission area development. Job creation is strongly emphasized when committing Rapid Response Funds.

The **Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund** is a key financial component to helping a community build economic capacity by providing funding for brownfield redevelopment. Brownfield redevelopment allows a community to reclaim and improve its lands, making property viable for new development. Grants are made through a competitive process that includes local evaluation.

The **Community Investment Funds** consist of state planning grants and contingency grants for communities that demonstrate an opportunity to develop assets or create jobs. Eligible applicants, including units of local government, nonprofit organizations, community improvement corporations, port authorities, and community action corporations can apply for up to \$10,000 in funds. Community Investment Grants require a 50 percent cash match by the grantee and all funds are provided on a reimbursement basis only. Funds can be used to purchase sustainable assets that can be utilized for at least five years.

The **Economic Development Program** awards federal funds to eligible units of local governments for economic development projects that create and/or retain permanent,



private-sector job opportunities. Applications are accepted on an open-window basis and are evaluated in part on the basis of community distress, unemployment rate, and low- and moderate-income population. Other considerations include program effectiveness, job quality, and leveraging ratio of program funds and overall community impact. The grants provide financial assistance through local governments to private entities (via loans) for economic development projects; and for public improvements directly related to business retention, expansion, or creation. Loan repayments from private entities are retained at the local level to capitalize Revolving Loan Funds for additional business assistance activities.

