

GO Virginia Economic Resiliency and Recovery Grant Program

Background:

The GO Virginia program was designed to help grow and diversify regional economies and increase wages in every region of the Commonwealth. Nine regional councils have organized and developed Growth and Diversification plans and strategies organized around their own unique resources and assets. These plans include focused and supported strategies in four key areas:

- Promoting the growth and competitiveness of firms in existing clusters that show high potential for growth (Cluster Scale Up);
- Talent pipeline development (Workforce Development);
- Creating a supportive ecosystem that encourages and supports startups and early stage firm (Start Up Ecosystem); and
- Increasing the number of business ready sites and related infrastructure (Sites and Infrastructure).

GO Virginia is prepared to pivot \$14.66M in statewide competitive funds (PY20) to respond to the unprecedented economic conditions facing Virginia due to the near and long-term effects of the coronavirus on regional economies. This initiative will focus resources on economic resiliency and recovery while staying true to the GO Virginia mission.

There is an opportunity to further strengthen the alignment of federal and state resources as part of this response around high-value activities that focus resources on targeted industry sectors and the supply chains that support them, as well as highly-impacted locally traded sectors as identified by the Regional Councils. We propose realigning the GO Virginia PY20 statewide competitive pool and creating a responsive grant program. This program would be time limited, with an initial 12-month application window, which could be extended by the State Board.

Funding:

GO Virginia would dedicate up to \$14.66M from the PY20 statewide competitive pool to create the GO Virginia Economic Resiliency and Recovery Grant Program. This program would help regions build capacity to support and serve existing businesses, with a priority on priority sectors and essential businesses, including the healthcare system and its supply chain during this crisis.

Modified Match Requirements:

This program would encourage regional participation, but request that the State Board eliminate the local match requirements for local governments, providing much needed relief during a time of fiscal distress. It would also reduce the one to one grant match requirement by half, as permitted by state law, due to the extraordinary economic events facing Virginia. These funds would leverage and compliment other state and federal resources that may become available.