

Request for Proposals (RFP)
Vocational Initiative for Thriving Appalachian Leadership (VITAL)
Training Consultants

Issued by: Fahe

Proposal Due Date: February 21, 2025

Introduction:

Fahe, a non-profit organization dedicated to building the American Dream in Appalachia, is seeking qualified trainers to develop and deliver two separate place-based trainings in support of the Vocational Initiative for Thriving Appalachian Leadership (VITAL) planning project. The VITAL initiative, in collaboration with six of Fahe's Member organizations and other key stakeholders, seeks to create a comprehensive plan to strengthen leadership, workforce development, and affordable housing across **Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and West Virginia**. The two place-based training sessions outlined in this RFP focus on different topics -- workforce development and training models for housing development (e.g., "earn and learn models," formal or informal (pre)apprenticeship programs, etc.) and commercial and residential energy efficiency, weatherization and solar programs. Each training is expected to be customized to meet the specific needs of Fahe member organizations. Applicants are welcome to apply to develop and deliver either one or both of these training sessions.

Project Overview:

The VITAL planning project, funded by an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) ARISE planning grant, leverages the expertise within Fahe's Network and beyond to create a multifaceted, multi-state plan. This plan addresses the challenges of attracting and retaining local leaders, developing a strong workforce, and resolving the region's housing crisis. The lead consultant, MKM Consultants LLC, hosts listening sessions and works with members to create individual partner work plans. This role requires working in conjunction with MKM Consultants and Fahe staff.

The Training Consultant(s) selected through this RFP ("The Trainer") will develop and conduct at least one of the local training for the Fahe members. Each training will be one workday long and led by the Trainer in person. The Trainer(s) will develop comprehensive learning and reference materials for trainees to retain for future use. The trainees will consist of leaders and key staff members from across Fahe's membership. The two trainings are scheduled for mid-April and early June, with specific

dates, locations, and the sequence of the trainings to be determined in collaboration with Fahe, MKM Consultants, and the Trainer(s).

Scope of Work:

The first training, designed for Fahe network members, will focus on strengthening and expanding workforce development initiatives in construction and skilled trades. Recognizing that many Fahe members already engage in workforce development, this training will build on existing efforts by providing resources and best practices tailored to non-profit housing developers. A key focus will be on implementing and enhancing "earn and learn" models, including apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training programs that equip community members with valuable skills while supporting affordable housing development and property maintenance. Trainings should cover best practices and resources for wraparound services and barrier-reduction supports for participants. Additionally, the training will explore strategies for integrating these models into broader workforce systems, leveraging partnerships with technical schools, community colleges, and workforce agencies. By participating, Fahe members will gain tools to develop sustainable pipelines of skilled workers, improve program effectiveness, and strengthen their capacity to build and maintain quality housing across Appalachia.

The second training will provide Fahe members with strategies and resources to enhance their energy efficiency, weatherization, and solar initiatives within their housing development work. Many members already operate weatherization programs and incorporate energy efficiency into new construction, but additional funding and models are needed to scale these efforts—particularly for home repair, rehabilitation, and retrofitting, where funding remains limited. This training will focus on practical approaches for non-profit housing developers, including identifying and securing grants and incentives, aligning with evolving regional energy standards, and integrating workforce training opportunities. Participants will explore cost-effective ways to improve building performance, reduce long-term utility costs for residents, and strengthen the sustainability of their housing portfolios. Additionally, the training will address the challenges of implementing energy efficiency measures in both new and existing housing stock, providing case studies and best practices from within the Fahe network and beyond. Solar integration will also be covered as a complementary strategy, with guidance on how it fits within broader energy efficiency and weatherization efforts. Social enterprise models should also be explored. By participating, Fahe members will be better positioned to access funding, expand their impact, and build resilient, energy-efficient housing across Appalachia.

For each separate training, the Trainer(s) will:

- **Create training outlines**
 - The Trainer will propose an outline for the place-based training. This should include the topics, times, methods, media, and other basic information as appropriate.
 - The Trainer will propose a similar outline for the take-home learning and reference materials.
 - MKM and FAHE will review these materials and make suggested edits before moving on to the next phase.
- **Create training materials**
 - Develop comprehensive training materials tailored to support leadership development, workforce expansion, and capacity building, incorporating best practices and successful models (within the scope of the topic described above) from Fahe Members and partners as well as those outside of Appalachia.
 - Training curriculum, description and necessary materials for the delivery of one workday of training on the selected topic
 - Comprehensive learning and reference materials that trainees can take with them
- **Deliver place-based training**
 - The Trainer will travel to the physical location of the training and deliver the training to Fahe member organization leaders and key staff on the selected topic
- **Be available for post-training follow-up or questions**
 - The trainer will make themselves available for up to 10 hours of answering questions in the two weeks following the training.

Project Timeline: Expected award on or around Feb 28, 2025

Training Outline 1 Delivery	Mar 14, 2025
Training Curriculum and Materials Delivery	Apr 1, 2025
First In-Person Training	April 16-17, 2025
Training Outline 2 Delivery	Apr 4, 2025
Training Curriculum and Materials Delivery	April 21, 2025
Second In-Person Training	May 14-15, 2025

General Qualifications:

For each separate training, the ideal applicant will have:

- Experience developing and delivering training.
- Excellent communication and organizational skills.
- The ability to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders.
- Familiarity with the Appalachian region and its unique challenges and opportunities preferred.
- Relevant experience working in the Appalachian region and/or in rural, economically distressed communities preferred.
- Commitment to meeting the project scope and delivering tailored, impactful training at the established times.
- Dedication to supporting Fahe members in strengthening affordable housing development and workforce across Appalachia.

Qualifications by specific training:

Applicants for the **Workforce Development Training:**

- Experience in workforce development, particularly “earn and learn” models, such as pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, internships, and transitional jobs as well as construction trades and delivering training on these topics.
- Best practices for integrating workforce development into existing affordable housing non-profit organizations.
- Extensive knowledge of funding models for workforce development.

Applicants for the **Energy Efficiency, Weatherization and Solar Training:**

- Expertise in energy efficiency, and weatherization and solar practices and experience in delivering training on these topics.
- Understanding of integrating these skills into affordable housing development and/or delivering these services as a social enterprise.
- Extensive knowledge of grants, incentives, and regional energy policies.

Proposal Requirements:

Applicants should submit a proposal for the training(s) for which they are interested (applying for one or both trainings is allowed), including:

- 1) **Cover Letter:**
 - a) Introduction to the Training Consultant and their relevant experience.
 - b) Specify which training topic the application is for
- 2) **Approach and Methodology (If applying for more than one training, provide this section for each training: up to 3 pages)**
 - a) Detailed description of how the Training Consultant plans to approach the development and execution of the training.
 - b) Detailed overview of the proposed contents for the reference and learning materials
- 3) **Relevant Experience: (If applying for more than one training, provide this section for each training: up to 2 pages)**
 - a) Detailed description of relevant experience
 - b) Examples of similar training work completed

- 4) **Team Composition:**
 - a) Resumes of the Trainer and any team members who will be involved in the project.
- 5) **Budget:**
 - a) Detailed budget proposal, including hourly rates and estimated total costs. Please note that travel, lodging, and costs associated with the two place-based trainings will be financed via a federally funded program; procured contract costs are capped according to the approved budget.
- 6) **Timeline:**
 - a) Proposed timeline for completing the training development, including key milestones and projections. All services must be completed by the conclusion of the scheduled training. Please note the timeline provided in this RFP and provide any additional details and/or modifications and the reasons for those modifications.
- 7) **References and Past Performance:**
 - a) Include at least two references for related projects

Submission Details:

Please submit your full proposal via email to traviss@fahe.org by February 21, 2025. When submitting, please use the subject line "Fahe ARISE TRAINER RFP". Proposals should be submitted as a PDF document, using 12-point font, with standard 1-inch margins. Fahe will confirm submissions are received and respond promptly with a timeline for review and final selection.

Proposals should clearly state which training topic they are applying for. Respondents applying for both should satisfy the proposal requirements for each training topic separately.

Evaluation Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated on a comprehensive 100-point scale based on the following criteria:

- Relevant experience and qualifications. (30 points)
- Understanding of the training scope and objectives. (20 points)
- Quality and feasibility of the proposed training. (30 point)
- Cost-effectiveness of the proposal. (10 points)
- References and past performance. (10 points)

Respondents applying for both trainings will be evaluated separately for each training.

Budget:

The budget allocated for **each** training is up to \$30,000, including all deliverables, travel and expenses.

Contact Information:

For any questions or further information, please contact Traviss Witt at traviss@fahe.org or 859-288-2126.

Conclusion:

Fahe looks forward to collaborating with a training consultant who shares our commitment to fostering resilient and thriving communities in Appalachia. Your expertise will be invaluable in helping us foster the knowledge and skills necessary to expand and refine the workforce systems and capabilities in housing development, addressing critical needs across the region and creating a lasting positive impact.

Meet Our Partners

- Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises (Fahe) – Kentucky
- HOMES, Inc. – Kentucky
- Housing Development Alliance (HDA) – Kentucky
- Hazard Community and Technical College – Kentucky
- Appalachia Service Project (ASP) – Tennessee
- Mountain T.O.P. – Tennessee
- Knoxville Leadership Foundation (KLF) – Tennessee
- Open Door Community (Formerly HOPE, Inc.) – Virginia
- New River / Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (WDB) – Virginia
- Coalfield Development – West Virginia
- West Virginia Community Hub (The Hub) —West Virginia
- West Virginia Women Work – West Virginia