

Request for Proposals (RFP)
Vocational Initiative for Thriving Appalachian Leadership (VITAL)
Training Consultant
Issued by: Fahe
Proposal Due Date: Mar 28, 2025 by Midnight

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 place-based training session outlined in this RFP focuses on **capacity building** for non-profit housing developers to expand their offerings to include commercial and residential energy efficiency, weatherization and solar programs. The training is expected to be customized to meet the specific needs of Fahe member organizations.

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 selected through this RFP ("The Trainer") will develop and conduct one of the local trainings for Fahe members. The training will be one workday long and led by the Trainer in person. The Trainer 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 training is scheduled for mid-May with specific date and location to be determined in collaboration with Fahe, MKM Consultants, and the Trainer(s).

Scope of Work:

The training will provide Fahe members with **strategies and resources** to enhance their energy efficiency, weatherization, and solar initiatives within their housing development work. The purpose of this training is to **increase the capacity of affordable housing developers and owners to develop new programming or expand existing programming** through innovative models (e.g. social enterprise or new partnerships) and identify sustainable funding. An organization that has started its own social enterprise or new organization to deliver energy efficiency retrofits would be encouraged to apply.

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. Solar programming can also be covered as a complementary strategy. *This training is not intended to provide technical skills to staff in how to conduct energy efficiency assessments or retrofits.*

The training should provide **case studies and best practices for creating new (or expanding existing) energy efficiency programs** and incorporating workforce development into those programs, including social enterprise models. By participating, Fahe members will be better positioned to develop or expand programs, access funding, expand their impact, and build resilient, energy-efficient housing across Appalachia.

The Trainer 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 April 4th

Training Outline Delivery	April 18, 2025
Training Curriculum and Materials Delivery	May 2, 2005
In-Person Training	May 14-15, 2025 (some flexibility on this proposed date). We will work together to identify an event space in a central location (at FAHE cost).

General Qualifications:

The ideal applicant will have:

- Experience developing and delivering training and/or experience operating an energy efficiency, weatherization or solar organization.
- 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:

- Expertise in creating energy efficiency and weatherization and solar programming and experience in delivering capacity building trainings.
- 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:

- 1) **Cover Letter:**
 - a) Introduction to the Training Consultant and their relevant experience.
- 2) **Approach and Methodology: (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: (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 place-based training 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 March 28 at midnight. 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)

Budget:

The budget allocated for the 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 energy efficiency capabilities in housing development, addressing critical needs across the region and creating 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](#)