

The Appalachian Sustainable Finance Hub Makes an Impact

Over 150 attendees from a five-state region convened to expand their network of resources.

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA, USA, May 29, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Appalachian Sustainable Finance Hub successfully kicked off their program with a virtual convening on May 21, 2024. Attracting over 150 attendees from organizations across Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Maryland, and Kentucky, the event highlighted the evolution of the project and its focus on building collaboration and resources for sustainability projects.

The Hub event highlighted not only the need to fill capacity gaps in Appalachia, but to effectively use labor's capital and public investments along with federal resources to produce "shovel-ready" clean economy projects.

Tom Croft, Executive Director of the <u>Steel Valley Authority</u>, challenged attendees with the question, "Can we together create a sustainable industrial policy that will rebuild our Appalachian communities and leave no worker behind?"

To effectively demonstrate how pooling of resources can benefit smaller communities, a panel discussion highlighted the roles of labor, private investments, community lenders, and community partnerships.

Breakout sessions further emphasized obstacles faced by these organizations and how the Hub can facilitate those relationships. Key themes included:

- •Project implementation challenges faced by the projects include funding gaps, technical assistance, regulatory barriers, and too much siloing.
- •Partnerships would benefit from educational support, more involvement from local governments, and innovative financing models.
- •Hub partnerships should evolve to include diverse stakeholders with resources to assist grassroot organizations, small towns, and rural areas who can benefit from regional collaboration.
- •Regional projects that could benefit from Hub collaboration include renewable energy initiatives, energy efficiency updates, and educational and community projects.

Interested organizations can learn more about the Appalachian Sustainable Finance Hub at their website.

The Steel Valley Authority was founded in 1985 as a local response to the decline of the steel industry. Their Heartland Capital Network works to highlight investment opportunities in the real economy by responsibly mobilizing workers' capital. The Appalachian Sustainable Finance Hub project is being funded through the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Carrie Mihalko SVA +1 4123420534 email us here

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