

AMLER Funding Application Tips

Disclaimer: This document is intended to provide suggestions and clarifications that will assist applicants in completing the application process. It is not a complete description or explanation of everything requested in the application and is intended to address frequently asked questions and help applicants avoid common errors and omissions. Applicants are solely responsible for ensuring that each application question is adequately addressed as worded, that each document requested or required by the application is provided, and that the project meets all federal and state requirements.

General Tips:

- Read OSMRE's AMLER Guidance document and the AMLER Terms & Conditions.
- Read through the entire application. Follow the instructions located near the end. Provide all requested information and attachments. All submissions must be electronic.
- These are direct payments from the Federal Office of Surface Mining Regulation and Enforcement (OSMRE) to an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Adherence to some, but not all, of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards and state laws, rules, and regulations is required. More specifically, federal adherence to 2CFR 200.0 - 200.1, 200.100 - 200.113, 200.303, 200 .331 - 200.333, 200.500 - 200.521 and the Virginia Public Procurement Act.
- Letters of Intent are strongly encouraged and should be submitted as early as possible. Don't wait until the deadline. Engage Virginia Energy staff as early in the application process as possible to facilitate eligibility determination.
- Funded projects typically hire contractors to complete work associated with engineering, plans, environmental and permitting compliance, construction, quality assurance, as-built drawings, etc. Projects should factor these expenses as well as AML remediation (if applicable) into their funding request and/or overall project cost. Projects are required to comply with the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) which typically occurs through the permitting process. Additionally, applicants should appropriately budget for compliance with the Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA).
- If a previous phase of the proposed project has received AMLER funding, clearly describe in the application how this phase has separately measurable outcomes beyond the previously funded phase(s) and distinguish in the narrative, map(s), budget(s), etc. how the AMLER funds will be used.

Submission Tips:

Application and required attachments should be electronically submitted as separate files. File names should reflect the project name type of document being submitted (e.g. project name -support letter1.pdf)

All letters of intent or support should be addressed to:

Tim Ferguson
AMLER Senior Project Specialist
Virginia Department of Energy
3405 Mountain Empire Road Big
Stone Gap, VA 24219

All submissions must be e-mailed to:
amler@energy.virginia.gov c/o Tim
Ferguson
AMLER Senior Project Specialist

General Information Page

Project Title

Be simple, yet descriptive. Avoid overly lengthy project names. Ensure the project title is consistent throughout the application.

AMLER Funding Requested and Total Estimated Project Cost

Ensure these numbers align with the narrative and budget spreadsheet. If additional funds are needed to complete the project, identify funding sources and current status in the project description and budget spreadsheet as appropriate. Provide documentation of that funding was applied for or awarded.

Partners

Partners are not entities that simply provide a letter of support. Identify only those partners that will have a direct role in project management or work. The role of each partner should be outlined in the Project Description. A letter of support must be included from each partner and should also mention their role.

Summary

This section should allow the reviewer to quickly and easily understand what the project proposes to accomplish and specifically how AMLER funds will be spent. This should not be treated as an introduction to the rest of the application. Be clear and concise.

Project Details

Clearly explain and describe the project, its objectives, and what AMLER funds will be used for.

Provide sufficient relevant background information to understand the context of the project and why it's important.

Timelines should avoid specific dates unless other factors necessitate. Instead note days/months from vetting approval.

Is additional funding required to complete the project? If so, what will it be used for and what is the current status of securing it?

For any challenges identified, explain how those challenges will be addressed.

What will the partners identified earlier in the application do? Will they have an active role in planning and/or implementing the project? Will they receive payment from AMLER funds?

Eligibility for AMLER

AMLER funds cannot be allocated to projects where AMLER funds will be expended on an area with an active surface coal mining permit. Active coal mining permit boundaries can be found on the Virginia Energy [Interactive Map of Southwest Virginia Coal Mined Lands](#).

Engage Virginia Energy staff as early in the application process as possible to facilitate eligibility determination.

AML problem types (i.e. features) can be found on OSMRE's website ([Priority 1&2](#) and [Priority 3](#)). Known locations of features and past AML reclamation project sites can be found on the [Virginia Energy Interactive Map of Abandoned Coal Mine Lands](#).

Economic and Community Development Nexus

Describe economic and community development needs or goals that will be met or achieved. Identify any relevant objectives included in strategic / comprehensive plans (local, regional, or otherwise).

Outcomes

Include tangible and/or quantifiable outcomes such as linear feet of road constructed, number of homes served by infrastructure installed, etc. Provide estimates to the extent possible. It's appropriate to use phrases such as "up to..." or "approximately" when providing estimates. Amount of funding expended is not an outcome. Refer to OSMRE's AMLER Guidance Section III and Section VII for example metrics. Immediate outcomes are those that will be achieved by the completion of the proposed project and will typically include things purchased, generated, constructed, created, or otherwise accomplished or impacted by the project.

Budget

The proposed budget should account for all anticipated and required expenditures associated with the project. If additional funds are needed to complete the project, identify funding sources and current status. Describe additional funding needed elsewhere in the application as appropriate. Documentation of additional funding already secured and applied for is required and must be attached.

Using the downloadable budget template spreadsheet, a more detailed breakdown of the expense categories may be provided, but clearly show where any added line items fit in the pre-defined categories. A more detailed budget may be required if the project is selected for further review.

Additional budget information to support the application such as vendor/contractor quotes, estimates from a preliminary engineering report, etc. should be submitted as an attachment if available.

Due to a soft cost limit of 10% for AMLER funds, the project must either adhere to the limit, justify exceeding the limit, or secure separate funding to make up any difference needed. Soft costs include project management, project development costs such as professional services for engineering, architectural design, environmental studies, and permits as well as inspections and other services during construction. Information justifying the need to exceed 10% may be provided in the additional comments section.

Logistics

Project Designs

Project plans are not required at time of submission, but please attach if available. Preparation of plans, if not already complete, should be factored into project costs as appropriate.

Project Area Ownership/Operation

This information may be included earlier in the application as a necessary part of the project description, but is specifically requested to be identified here. Select the appropriate choice for the owner/lease arrangement and expand on those details in the following question.

Operation and Maintenance Costs

Describe how the project will be maintained or sustained once completed. Will revenue be self-generated? Will ongoing support from a public body be required? If so, is that committed in a letter of support?

Attachments

All attachments are REQUIRED unless otherwise specified.

Attachment should be submitted as separate files.

The project budget summary should be listed in the table provided in the application. A separate budget attachment that further breaks down the line items may also be provided at this time. A more detailed budget may be required if the project is selected for further review.

Site photos should be on-the-ground photos of the project location, any AML features, etc. Filenames should be descriptive or the photos may be captioned within a document.

Professionally appearing maps are preferred, but are not required. Self-generated maps using Google Earth or hand-drawn maps (preferably overlaid on aerial imagery) are acceptable.

Letters of support are required from project partners. Letters from other relevant parties should be included as appropriate.

If other funding sources will be utilized and the status is anything other than “will apply”, provide documentation reflecting that status.

Project designs/plans are not required at time of submission, but should be attached if available. Preparation of plans, if not already complete, should be factored into project costs and timeline as appropriate.

Any additional budget information that helps provide context and justification for your funding request should be provided. This may be in the form of estimates contained in a preliminary engineering report, quotes from a vendor or contractor, or other relevant information.