

Vision: Central Appalachia’s investment ecosystem supports the sustainable and equitable flow of integrated capital to communities in ways that build local wealth and improve the health of all people in the region.

Strategies

Short-Term Outcomes

Long-Term Outcomes

1. Create scalable practitioner capacity to participate fully in the investment ecosystem

Increase opportunities and capabilities for community economic development practitioners to advance their work using blended capital investments.

Audience: Community Economic Development Practitioners

- a. Central Appalachia intermediaries create and test new financial interventions, building ecosystem capacity by “learning by doing.”
- b. Community Economic Development practitioners have increased understanding, skills, and tools related to investment readiness and blended finance.
- c. Increasing capital deployment begins to build local and regional wealth and advance social and economic opportunities across the region.

- 1. Central Appalachia community economic development practitioners have enhanced and scalable capacity to deploy capital and positively impact communities.

2. Address Financing Obstacles

Strengthen the existing ecosystem of financial intermediaries through increased connectivity, coordination, and tools for deployment.

Audience: Capital Intermediaries

- a. Community development organizations (including CHDOs) have the capacity to spot and frame investment opportunities and the network connections to move those investments forward through the pipeline.
- b. Small business owners and others are connected to the technical assistance and support needed to effectively deploy capital needed to start, grow, and sustain their businesses.
- c. Community capital providers, like CDFIs and banks, working in partnership with community development organizations are better able to spot small business and investment opportunities outside major population centers (e.g., the hills and hollers).
- d. Philanthropic organizations understand and value the roles necessary to advance social and economic opportunities and begin to invest in building and sustaining that local capacity.

- 2. Central Appalachia’s capital intermediary networks have the capacities and connections at the ground level to successfully spot and frame deals, address financing obstacles, and blend capital sources for deals that advance social and economic opportunities.

3. Diversify and Increase Flow of Integrated Capital

Demonstrate the value and potential of blended capital investment through a set of deals that highlight the region’s potential for creative investment.

Audience: Investors

- a. Through the work of regional practitioners, investors identify and actively consider viable regional investment opportunities.
- b. New regional investments have a defined capital stack that is not exclusively reliant on grant resources.
- c. New regional investment opportunities have made documented progress toward becoming finance ready as measured by advancement through the CCI pipeline.

- 3. The region can point to a documented set of investments that are ready for integrated capital or have been financed with an integrated capital stack.

4. Capture and Share Learning

Organized regional networks and national allies engage in learning opportunities to capture and share knowledge on how to build an effective investment ecosystem.

Audience: Community Capital Field

- a. Community investment language and ecosystem discussions are captured in real time and shared with regional partners to improve practice.
- b. Learnings from this work are shared with the Appalachia Funders Network, Central Appalachia Network, CDFIs, and other practitioner networks both in the region and beyond.

- 4. Learnings from this work, including community investment language and ecosystem discussions, influence the field regionally and beyond.

5. Develop an inclusive, equitable pipeline and investment ecosystem

Broaden participation in and inclusivity of the region’s investment ecosystem through employing an equity focus that includes accessible learning/training, community engagement and values-based accountability.

Audience: Communities

- a. AIEI promotes opportunities to strengthen community participation in investment ecosystems.
- b. A diverse, inclusive set of ecosystem practitioners across the region understand the capital absorption process and are able to apply it to scale.
- c. Actors outside the traditional investment system are introduced to new and preexisting avenues for investment participation.
- d. People, businesses, organizations and practitioners partner to enhance and scale investment opportunities.

- 5. People, businesses, organizations, and practitioners in historically underinvested, rural settings are able to actively participate in and shape their own local investment ecosystems.