



Buncombe County Economic Development

E.B. Odderstol

Economic Development Program Analyst

Buncombe County proposes to host a NCEDA Foundation Summer Fellow to support the County's economic recovery from Hurricane Helene. Buncombe County is the largest county by population in Western North Carolina and the Economic Development Department seeks to create a robust and sustainable regional economy that builds on our homegrown industries and talent and provide economic mobility for residents. The details of the proposal are below.

Project Description

Buncombe County was recently devastated by Hurricane Helene and as we look toward our economic recovery planning, the Economic Development Department proposes to use a NCEDA Fellow to assist with our Economic Revitalization Support Function. The Economic Recovery Support Function is one of the seven components of the County's overall recovery plan. The other functions include Debris, Education, Housing, Health and Human Services, Infrastructure, and Natural and Cultural Resources. The County also partners closely with local partners, The Economic Development Coalition (EDC) and the City of Asheville, on their recovery activities. Exact projects will be dependent on the needs at the time, but could include coordinating with the Economic Development Coalition on implementation of the Av15x5 strategy, collaborating with the other Recovery Support Functions, assisting with the development of strategies to support the local workforce, identifying opportunities for local economic diversification, researching recovery best practices, and supporting the Economic Revitalization Support Function's regular activities.

The NCEDA Fellow will gain valuable experience in managing projects, researching best practices, working with local economic development stakeholders, and working towards economic recovery in a disaster impacted community.

Project Deliverables

Throughout the course of the summer fellowship, the NCEDA fellow will be responsible for:

1. Coordinating Economic Revitalization Support Function Activities
2. Collaborating with the Economic Development Coalition on implementation of the Av15x5 Strategy
3. Producing reports on impact to local workforce and strategies to assist with workforce recovery post-Helene
4. Doing market analysis, identifying opportunities for market diversification, and reporting to stakeholders
5. Researching recovery best practices, producing reports, and reporting out to stakeholders
6. Supporting Buncombe County Economic Development Staff to facilitate projects and manage internal processes to move items through appropriate approval