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## **Pennsylvania SBDC and Kleinman Center for Energy Policy Join Forces to Help Small Businesses in Coal Impacted Communities**

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. – The [Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers](#) (SBDC) and the [Kleinman Center for Energy Policy](#), both based at the University of Pennsylvania, have been awarded a planning grant as part of the [U.S. Economic Development Administration \(EDA\)'s POWER Initiative](#). The goal of the project is to develop a statewide roadmap which policymakers and practitioners can use to identify and implement local and statewide action steps to provide services to prepare, sustain, and grow small businesses affected by changes in the coal economy.

Working with the Kleinman Center, the Pennsylvania SBDC will spearhead the development of a plan to outline strategic responses to enable small businesses to successfully adapt to the rapid transitions occurring in the power sector and in coal-reliant communities and supply chains.

“The SBDCs are active players in all of the regions of the state that will be targeted by this project and are involved in regional planning activities related to responding to the changing coal economy,” said Pennsylvania SBDC State Director Christian Conroy. “The goal is to identify needs and opportunities that are common to these regions so that a multi-faceted approach can be implemented to sustain and grow the state’s critically important small business sector,” he added.

“There is much being said about coal communities, but very little being done. This important partnership is dedicated to finding solutions for those people and places that bear the brunt of changes in the U.S. energy system. The Kleinman Center is committed to bringing the very best scholarship to bear on these very human challenges,” says Mark Alan Hughes, Professor of Practice at PennDesign, and Faculty Director of the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy.

EDA’s POWER Initiative is an integrated, multi-agency effort to invest federal economic and workforce development resources in communities and regions negatively impacted by changes in the coal economy. Under POWER, the term *coal economy* is used to refer to the complete supply chain of coal-reliant industries. This includes, but is not limited to: coal mining, coal-fired power plants, and related transportation, logistics, and supply chain manufacturing.

The project plan of the Pennsylvania SBDC and the Kleinman Center will include three phases: research; obtaining statewide, regional, and local input; and planning for implementation. The initial phase will focus on gaining a better understanding of the coal mining and power industries, while collecting detailed data on the coal impacted regions which can be used to help identify issues and craft potential solutions. The second phase will include verifying the initial research and findings through convening a series of statewide and local stakeholder meetings. The final phase will include presenting the plan to stakeholders and gathering support for implementation.

(MORE)

## SBDC Locations

Bucknell University

Clarion University

Duquesne University

Gannon University

Indiana University  
of PennsylvaniaKutztown University  
of Pennsylvania

Lehigh University

Lock Haven University

Penn State University

Saint Francis University

Saint Vincent College

Shippensburg University

Temple University

University of Pittsburgh

University of Scranton

The Wharton School,  
University of Pennsylvania

Widener University

Wilkes University

Companies in coal impacted communities who are interested in working with their local SBDC for confidential, no-cost business consulting can visit <http://pasbdc.org/centers> to find the center that serves their county.

Stakeholders and policymakers interested in being involved in this project should contact the Pennsylvania SBDC at [pasbdc@wharton.upenn.edu](mailto:pasbdc@wharton.upenn.edu).

**About Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)**

*The Pennsylvania SBDC network is the only statewide, nationally accredited program that provides high quality one-on-one consulting, training and information resources to empower new and existing businesses. SBDC consultants work with entrepreneurs in confidential, individualized sessions to help them with a range of business issues including testing a new business proposition, shaping a business plan, investigating funding opportunities, and much more. The SBDC program is a public/private partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and 18 universities and colleges across the Commonwealth. For more information on the Pennsylvania SBDC services and impact, please visit [www.pasbdc.org](http://www.pasbdc.org).*

**About Kleinman Center for Energy Policy**

*The mission of the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy is to cultivate energy policy innovation and promote its application—creating opportunities for students, researchers, and professionals to debate viewpoints, explore options, and develop agendas for decision and action. The Kleinman Center focuses on projects that foster thoughtful and impactful energy-related research; develop the next generation of energy leaders; and create conditions for energy policy stakeholders to explore options and develop agendas. To learn more, please visit [kleinmanenergy.upenn.edu](http://kleinmanenergy.upenn.edu).*

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