

3.2 PARTNERSHIPS

Public-private partnerships are key to eliminating the digital divide in Arkansas and fostering such relationships remains the preferred method of action for developing effective stakeholder engagement and sourcing programmatic efforts. To assist in its mission of connecting the unconnected, ARConnect has and continues to partner with numerous public, private, nonprofit, and philanthropic organizations. Table 6 below provides a comprehensive listing of ARConnect's partnerships, both past and present, across all three pillars of broadband: access (infrastructure deployment), affordability outreach, and digital skills and opportunity.

TABLE 6: PARTNERS

Partners	Description
AARP Arkansas	Committed to working with local leaders to improve residents' quality of life by implementing quick-action projects that will jumpstart long-term change in their communities, especially for Arkansans over the age of 50
Accelerate Arkansas	Initial pilot group of five communities that worked with the Arkansas Connectivity Coalition and completed a 14-week intensive broadband training program meant to add organizational knowledge and capacity, specific to broadband, with the ultimate goal of bringing broadband service to the area using federal and state funding opportunities. The communities involved were Cleveland County, the City of Elaine, the City of Hughes, the City of Keo, and the City of West Memphis
Affordable Housing Association of Arkansas	With more than 80 member organizations representing over 12,000 affordable housing units around the state, Affordable Housing Association of Arkansas is dedicated to the enhancement of multi-family housing through promotion of professionalism of apartment management
Arkansas Association of Community Action Agencies	A non-profit organization that serves as the hub for a network of 14 community-based private, nonprofit organizations that provide assistance to low- and moderate-income individuals across the state
Arkansas Association of Counties	Provides a single source of cooperative support and information for all counties, and county and district officials, with the focus of improving county government in Arkansas
Arkansas Community Foundation	Since 1976, Arkansas Community Foundation has provided more than \$393 million in grants and partnered with thousands of Arkansans to help improve neighborhoods, towns, cities, and the state
Arkansas Connectivity Coalition	A group of 17 non-profit organizations with broadband interests working to prepare communities for establishing and implementing full-scale broadband connectivity visions
Arkansas Department of Corrections	Provides public safety by carrying out the mandate of the courts; provides a safe, humane environment for staff and inmates; strengthens work ethic through teaching of good habits; and provides opportunities for staff and inmates to improve spiritually, mentally, and physically
Arkansas Department of Education	Aims to ensure that every Arkansan is prepared, supported, and inspired to succeed in school, career, community, and life
Arkansas Department of Labor	Seeks to promote workplace health and safety through consultation and enforcement; protect employers and employees from financial burden imposed by work-related injury and disease; and provide consumer protection through occupational licensing as authorized by Arkansas law
Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc.	Provides education, public relations, governmental affairs, and other support services to its 17 member-owners who are the electric distribution cooperatives in Arkansas; also sells electric utility materials and equipment and provides related services to and for electric utilities across the United States
Arkansas Farm Bureau	A grassroots organization that represents more than 190,000 families throughout the state by advocating for and promoting agriculture throughout Arkansas, the region, and the country
Arkansas Hospital Association	Works toward the betterment of hospitals by instituting spirited programs in education, government relations, research, and communications
Arkansas Impact Philanthropy	Convenes funders to collaborate, influence, and invest for economic improvement throughout Arkansas
Arkansas Office of Skills Development	A division of the Arkansas Department of Commerce, OSD strategically invests in all levels of the Arkansas workforce and worked with industry, educational, and nonprofit partners to create broadband-related workforce programs
Arkansas Rural Health Partnership	A non-profit healthcare network comprised of 16 rural hospital members, 3 medical teaching institutions, and 2 FQHCs throughout south Arkansas

Partners	Description
Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce	The leading voice for business in Arkansas and serves as the primary business advocate on all issues affecting Arkansas employers
Arkansas State University - Three Rivers	Trains new broadband and telecommunication industry workers to close the workforce gap
Arkansas Support Network	Provides support and services to individuals and families with children with disabilities
Arkansas Veterans Association	An organization that represents and supports veterans
Better Development Partners	A faith-based community in Little Rock that aims to improve quality of life for low-income, underserved, disadvantaged, and at-risk children, youth, and family
Communities Unlimited	A non-profit organization that serves seven states in the southern United States, connecting people to solutions through human connections
DecARate	A non-profit with active work inclusive of required covered populations
Diamond State Networks	A wholesale broadband provider that unites the fiber-optic networks of electric cooperatives throughout Arkansas
Disability Rights Arkansas	An independent, private, nonprofit organization designated by the governor to implement federally funded and authorized Protection and Advocacy systems throughout the state
EducationSuperHighway	Arkansas was the first state in the country to partner with the national non-profit EducationSuperHighway to close the broadband affordability gap through a statewide initiative to encourage Arkansans to enroll in the ACP program, if eligible
Forward Arkansas	A public-private partnership established in 2014 by the Arkansas State Board of Education, the Walton Family Foundation, and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to increase student achievement and economic prosperity for Arkansas
Goodwill Industries of Arkansas	A non-profit that impacts underserved communities by providing education, training, and employment
Internet Service Providers	Since 2020, ARConnect has partnered with Internet Service Providers for broadband infrastructure deployment activities through the ARC program
Pulaski County Sheriff's Office	A government entity that requested county residents complete steps to identify areas in need of broadband access
Refugee Resettlement Office, a ministry of Catholic Charities of Arkansas	Provides services and assistance to refugees, asylees, Special Immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan (SIVs), Cuban parolees, and victims of trafficking
Runway Group	A holding company making investments in real estate, outdoor initiatives, hospitality, and businesses committed to moving Northwest Arkansas forward
University of Arkansas - Community College Morrilton	Trains new broadband and telecommunication industry workers to close the workforce gap
University of Arkansas - Cossatot	Trains new broadband and telecommunication industry workers to close the workforce gap
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension	A division of the University of Arkansas System leveraging resources and purposeful action to assist in eliminating the digital divide in Arkansas, with a focus on digital skills