



United States Department of Agriculture

**RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Telecommunications Programs**

**Schools, Health & Libraries
Broadband Coalition Conference**

May 2, 2013

Mary M. Campanola
Special Projects Coordinator

202-720-8822

mary.campanola@wdc.usda.gov



Broadband Investment in Rural Areas

- **Current Telecom Program Loan Portfolio: \$4.6 billion (as of April 2013)**
 - Approximately \$4.1 billion principal outstanding for Telecom Infrastructure Loan and Farm Bill Broadband Loan Program borrowers
 - Approximately \$.575 billion principal outstanding for loans under the Broadband Initiatives Program (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009)



United States Department of Agriculture

RUS Telecom Program FY 2013 Submission Dates

- **Loan Programs - Telecom Infrastructure Loan Program and Farm Bill Broadband Loan Program:**
 - RUS accepts applications for the loan programs on a continual basis; there is no application deadline.
- **Grant Programs - Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program and Community Connect Grant Program:**
 - Funding availability is usually announced in the Spring, with a 60-day application window
 - Application windows for FY2013 have not yet been announced



United States Department of Agriculture

The Community Connect Grant Program

- A nationally competitive grant program to provide broadband service to the most rural and economically challenged communities
- Since inception, the program has provided 229 grants and invested \$122 million
- Rural Areas and Communities of 20,000 population or less
- RUS published a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* on November 16, 2012, which proposed a number of changes to the current regulation.
- Final Rule is in the process of being published.
- Grantees must provide 15% matching
- Information is available on the website at:
http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp_commconnect.html



United States Department of Agriculture

The Community Connect Grant Program

Eligible Applicants

- Corporations
- Limited Liability Companies
- Cooperative or Mutual Organizations
- Indian Tribes
- Public Body



United States Department of Agriculture

The Community Connect Grant Program

Definitions

The Community Connect regulation contains the definitions of the following terms, which will be included in the Notice of Funding Availability announcing the grant program:

- Broadband Service: minimum rate of data transmission described in the NOFA to determine eligibility of the Proposed Funded Service Area
- Broadband Grant Speed: the minimum bandwidth described in the NOFA that an applicant must propose to deliver
- Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA): the geographic area within an eligible Rural Areas or eligible Rural Areas, in which the applicant proposes to provide service
- Rural Area: means any area, as confirmed by the latest decennial census of the Bureau of the Census, which is not located within:
 - A city, town, or incorporate area that has a population of greater than 20,000 inhabitants; or
 - An urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants. For purposes of the definition of rural area, an urbanized area means a densely populated territory as defined in the latest decennial census of the U.S. Census Bureau.



The Community Connect Grant Program Eligible Community Connect Grant Project

To be eligible for a Community Connect competitive grant, the Project must:

- Serve a PFSA in which Broadband Service does not currently exist;
- Offer service at the Broadband Grant Speed to all residential and business customers within the PFSA;
- Offer free service at the Broadband Grant Speed to all Critical Community Facilities located within the PFSA for at least 2 years starting from the time service becomes available to each Critical Community Facility;
- Provide a Community Center with at least 2 Computer Access Points and wireless access at the Broadband Grant Speed, free of all charges to all users for at least 2 years.



The Community Connect Grant Program

Eligible Grant Purposes

Grant funds may be used to finance:

- The construction, acquisition, or leasing of facilities, including spectrum, land or buildings, used to deploy service at the Broadband Grant Speed to all residential and business customers located with the Proposed Funded Service Area and all participating Critical Community Facilities, including funding for up to ten Computer Access Points to be used in the Community Center.
- The improvement, expansion, construction, or acquisition of a Community Center and provision of Computer Access Points.
- The cost of providing the necessary bandwidth for service free of charge to the Critical Community Facilities for 2 years.



The Community Connect Grant Program

Scoring

There are 100 possible points:

- An analysis of the challenges of the following criteria, laid out on a community-wide basis, and how the Project proposes to address these issues (up to 50 points)
 - The economic characteristics;
 - Educational challenges;
 - Health care needs; and
 - Public safety issues;
- The extent of the Project's planning, development, and support by local residents, institutions, and Critical Community Facilities (up to 40 points);
- The level of experience and past success of operating broadband systems for the management team (up to 10 points).
- The RUS Administrator may take into consideration the characteristics of the PFSA, provided by the applicant in the application, such as:
 - Persistent poverty counties that will be served within the PFSA;
 - Out-migration Communities that will be served within the PFSA;
 - The rurality of the PFSA;
 - The speed of service provided by the Project;
 - Community members with disabilities that will be served within the PFSA; and
 - Any other additional factors that may be outlined in the NOFA.



United States Department of Agriculture

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program

Definitions and Purpose

- DLT Grants are not just a way to obtain educational technology or medical equipment. The focus is on using the unique capabilities of telecommunications to connect rural areas to each other and to the world, thus overcoming the effects of remoteness and low population density.

Distance learning means a curriculum delivered via telecommunications and stresses the connection of students and teachers at remote sites.

Telemedicine means the delivery of health care from medical professionals at one site to patients at other sites via telecommunications. Telemedicine shows benefit to rural residents either in reduced travel or access to services.



United States Department of Agriculture

DLT Grant Program Eligible Applicants

- Corporation or a partnership; tribal nation or organization a state or local unit of government; a consortium; or other legal entity. For or not-for profit able to contract with the US Government.
- Operate a rural community facility or deliver DLT services to entities that operate a rural community facility or to residents of rural areas at rates calculated to ensure that the benefit of the financial assistance passes through to such entities or to residents of rural areas.



The DLT Grant Program Eligible Equipment

- This list is not exhaustive and does not convey automatic eligibility. To be eligible in full, items must be primarily for DLT eligible purposes.
 - Audio and video equipment
 - Computer hardware and software
 - Computer network components
 - Terminal equipment
 - Data terminal equipment
 - Interactive audio/video equipment
 - OEM or OEM-authorized warranties on eligible equipment up to the 3-year life of the grant
 - Inside wiring



United States Department of Agriculture

The DLT Grant Program

- Grant funds cannot be used to purchase:
 - Salaries and benefits
 - Administrative expenses (overhead)
 - Telecommunications transmission equipment
 - Recurring costs, including telecommunications
 - Medical equipment
 - Equipment owned by telecom provider (LECs, CLECs, etc.)
 - Duplication of facilities
 - Costs incurred before the application deadline



United States Department of Agriculture

The DLT Grant Program

Scoring

- Scoring: 220 Points possible in 8 scoring categories:
 1. Rurality (population density) – 45 points
 2. National School Lunch Program (economic need) – 35 points
 3. Leveraging (matching funds) – 35 points
 4. USDA-designated Empowerment Zones – 10 points
 5. Additional National School Lunch Program – 10 points
 6. Need for Services and Project Benefits – 45 points
 7. Innovativeness – 15 points
 8. Cost Effectiveness – 35 points



The DLT Grant Program

Typical Projects

- Video-conferencing is the most common for distance learning
- Telemedicine:
 - Visiting nurse links from patient homes to health professionals elsewhere
 - Tele-radiology
 - Tele-dentistry
 - Tele-pharmacy
 - Virtual ICU



United States Department of Agriculture

Contact Information

Telecommunications Program

1400 Independence Ave.

Washington, DC 20250

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RUSTelecomPrograms.html>

Telecommunications Program Headquarters Staff:

Jonathan Claffey, jon.claffey@wdc.usda.gov; Acting Assistant Administrator, 202-720-9556

Mary Campanola, mary.campanola@wdc.usda.gov; Special Projects Coordinator, 202-720-8822

Kathie Klass, kathie.klass@wdc.usda.gov; Senior Outreach Coordinator, 202-720-2284

Peter Aimable, peter.aimable@wdc.usda.gov; Director, Northern Division, 202-720-0806

Norberto Esteves, norberto.esteves@wdc.usda.gov; Acting Director, Advanced Services Division, 202-720-0699

Shawn Arner, shawn.arnier@wdc.usda.gov; Director, Southern Division, 202-720-0711

Ken Kuchno, kenneth.kuchno@usda.gov; Director, Broadband Division, 202-690-4673

General Field Representatives:

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTTP_GFRContact.html