

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Seeks Applications to Support Rural Entrepreneurs and Create Jobs for People in Rural America

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23, 2022 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small today announced that USDA is accepting applications to support economic development and create jobs for people in rural America.

USDA is making this funding available under the [Rural Business Development Grant](#) program to support business opportunities or business enterprise projects in rural communities. Eligible entities are rural towns, communities, state agencies, authorities, nonprofits, federally recognized Tribes, public institutions of higher education and non-profit cooperatives.

Business opportunity projects are used to identify and analyze business opportunities that will use local rural materials or human resources. These projects must be consistent with local and area-wide community and economic development strategic plans. Projects must also support other economic development activities in the project area. They may include establishing business support centers or financing job training and leadership development in rural areas. Enterprise projects include the repair or modernization of buildings, technical assistance such as feasibility studies or business plans, or equipment purchases for leasing to small or emerging businesses.

In fiscal year 2023, USDA anticipates that part of the funding may be set aside for federally recognized Native American Tribes, Rural Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities/Rural Economic Area Partnerships, projects located in persistent poverty areas (including those of Native Americans), and Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) projects. Eligible applicants for the persistent poverty and SECD set-aside funds must demonstrate that 100% of the benefits of an approved grant will assist beneficiaries in the designated areas.

Applications for grants, including all set-aside funds, must be submitted in paper or electronic format to the USDA Rural Development State Office in the state where the project is located by 4:30 p.m. local time on Feb. 28, 2023. For additional information, visit [Grants.gov](#) or see page 71571 of the Nov. 23, 2022, [Federal Register](#).

USDA Rural Development encourages applicants to consider projects that will advance key priorities under the Biden-Harris Administration to help rural America build back better and stronger. Key priorities include creating new and better markets, addressing the impacts of climate change and advancing equity in rural America. For more information, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>.

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