

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

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

WASHINGTON, Sept. 28, 2021 – The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that it 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 for eligible entities to support business opportunity and 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. Such projects must be consistent with any local and area-wide community and economic development strategic plans and are used to support other economic development activities in the project area. Projects include the establishment of business support centers or to finance job training and leadership development in rural areas. Funding for business enterprise projects must be used to finance or develop small and emerging businesses in rural areas. Enterprise projects include the repair or modernization of buildings, technical assistance to a small business such as feasibility studies or business plans, or an equipment purchase for leasing to a small or emerging business.

In Fiscal Year 2022, USDA anticipates that part of the funding will be set aside for federally recognized Native American tribes, Rural Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Communities/Rural Economic Area Partnerships, projects located in Persistent Poverty areas, including those of Native Americans, and for Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) projects. Eligible applicants for the persistent poverty and SECD set-aside funds must demonstrate that 100 percent of the benefits of an approved grant will assist beneficiaries in the designated areas.

Applications for grant funding, including all set-aside funds, must be submitted to the USDA Rural Development State Office for the state where the project is located by 4:30 p.m. local time on Feb. 28, 2022. For additional information, visit [Grants.gov](#) or see page 53270 of the Sept. 27, 2021, [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 combatting the COVID-19 pandemic; addressing the impacts of climate change; and/or advancing equity in rural America.

If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

###

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.