



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Rural Development

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program Application Guide Fiscal Year 2018



Rural Utilities Service
Telecommunications Program

April 2018

**DISTANCE LEARNING & TELEMEDICINE PROGRAM
GRANT APPLICATION GUIDE
FISCAL YEAR 2018**

**RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

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Introduction and General Information

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

General Information:

Distance Learning is a telecommunications link to an end user through the use of equipment to provide educational programs, instruction, or information originating in one area to students and teachers who are located in rural areas and to connect teachers and students located in one rural area with teachers and students in a different rural area. Telemedicine is a telecommunications link to an end user from medical professionals at separate sites in order to exchange health care information for the purpose of providing improved health care services primarily to residents of rural areas.

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program is specifically designed to assist rural communities in acquiring distance learning and telemedical technologies so that local teachers, and medical service providers who serve rural residents can link to other teachers, medical professionals, and other needed expertise located at distances too far to access otherwise. Since 1994, the DLT Grant Program has helped to establish hundreds of distance learning and telemedicine systems improving quality of life for thousands of residents in rural communities all across the United States.

!! BEFORE YOU GET STARTED !!

You must read:

7 CFR 1734, Subpart A and B

Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA) published in the Federal Register April 3, 2018.

DLT Program Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>;

The regulation **MUST** be used in conjunction with this Application Guide. Should any differences result in the interpretation of this Application Guide and the regulation, the regulation takes precedence over information contained in this Application Guide.

For additional information concerning this grant program, please contact:

Loan Origination and Approval Division, Telecommunications Program

(202) 720-0800 or Email: dlinfo@wdc.usda.gov

Additional information and forms are available on our website at:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>

When and Where to Submit Application:

GRANT applications must be postmarked by:

JUNE 4, 2018

Applications must be submitted in **EITHER** of the following two ways:

1. Electronically via www.grants.gov

If submitting via grants.gov, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all required documentation is included with the submittal.

OR

2. Postmarked, shipped, or hand-delivered 2 paper copies of a completed application, one with original signatures, accompanied by a full electronic copy in the form of a USB Flash Drive. The paper applications and a USB Flash Drive must be submitted to:

Deputy Assistant Administrator

Loan Origination and Approval Division

Rural Utilities Service

STOP 1597, Room 2844

1400 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-1597

Due to the possible disruptions in mail delivery service, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications via express mail or hand delivery to our office.

Applicants that submit their applications after the deadline noted above will be notified that their applications will not be considered for funding and their applications will be returned.

Prior to official submission of applications, applicants may request technical assistance or other application guidance from the Agency, as long as such requests are made prior to May 18, 2018. Technical assistance is not meant to be an analysis or assessment of the quality of the materials submitted, a substitute for agency review of completed applications, nor a determination of eligibility, if such determination requires in-depth analysis. The Agency will not solicit or consider scoring or eligibility information that is submitted after the application deadline. The Agency reserves the right to contact applications to seek clarification information on materials contained in the submitted application.

Applications Delivered by Mail:

Paper applications must show proof of mailing or shipping consisting of one of the following:

1. A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark;
2. A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS by midnight Eastern Time; or
3. A dated shipping label from a commercial carrier showing that the commercial carrier received the package on or before the application submittal deadline. Self-generated shipping labels where the actual pickup by the carrier occurs after the application submittal deadline are not acceptable.

If an application is sent through the USPS, neither of the following will be accepted as proof of mailing:

1. A private metered postmark; or
2. A mail receipt that is not dated by the USPS.

Applicants should note that the USPS does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office.

Applications Delivered by Hand:

Applications delivered by hand will be accepted daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time), except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays. Individuals delivering applications must provide proper identification to enter the building.

Applications Submitted Electronically:

Electronic applications will only be accepted when submitted through the Grants.gov website. Applications will not be accepted via facsimile machine transmission or electronic mail.

<https://www.grants.gov>

Before submitting an application on-line, the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) strongly encourages you to obtain all necessary sign-ups, credentials and authorizations well in advance of the deadline including the required SAM.gov registration. Grants.gov requires some one-time credentialing and online authentication procedures. These procedures may take several business days to complete. Several requirements on Grants.gov and SAM.gov call for an annual update; applicants should also ensure that their credentials and authorizations are up-to-date.

The Grants.gov website, like all web facilities, has finite capacity. If several federal grant programs have the same application deadline date, periods of site overloading can be experienced. Please plan accordingly.

Please follow the instructions at Grants.gov. If you experience a technical problem retrieving or submitting an electronic application, contact the Grants.gov customer support resources (click the "Customer Support" tab on any page of Grants.gov to get started). RUS staffers do not control the technical aspects of Grants.gov and won't be able to help you if you experience a problem. However, we are available to answer questions about the Program and the contents of an application.

Grants.gov applications must be signed by an Authorized Signer and submitted by midnight Eastern Time.

Additional Registration Requirements for all Applicants:

Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System Registration – As required by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), all applicants for grants must supply a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying. The Standard Form 424 (SF-424) contains a blank to enter your DUNS number. The DUNS number can be obtained free of charge by calling Dun & Bradstreet.

Please see: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

for more information on how to obtain a DUNS number or how to verify your organization's number.

The DUNS number must belong to the Applicant, not an affiliate, subsidiary or parent company.

System for Award Management Registration – Applicants, whether applying electronically or by paper, also must register in the System for Award Management (SAM) PRIOR to submitting an application. Applicants may register for the SAM free of charge at <https://www.sam.gov/>. Applicants should keep in mind that it can take up to ten (10) business days to register with SAM. Applicants should plan accordingly and begin the process well in advance of the application deadline.

The SAM registration must remain active with current information at all times while RUS is considering an application or while a Federal Grant Award or loan is active. To maintain the registration in the SAM database the applicant must review and update the information free of charge in the SAM database annually from date of initial registration or from the date of the last update. The applicant must ensure that the information in the database is current, accurate, and complete.

Please check your SAM registration for accuracy prior to submitting your application.

Changes for 2018:

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program regulations have been rewritten with significant changes. The regulations have been retitled 7 CFR Part 1734.

Changes to the Regulation:

Changes to the DLT grant program regulation are statutory requirements and non-statutory issues.

Statutory Changes:

1. In 7 CFR part 1703, subpart E (newly designated 7 CFR part 1734, subpart B), revises the “Appeals” section. In review of the guiding statute, program appeals are defined as applying only to RUS Telecommunications and Electric Borrowers.
2. In 7 CFR part 1703, subpart D (newly designated 7 CFR part 1734, subpart A), The Agency is revising this regulation to make RUS Telecom and Electrics borrowers eligible to apply for grants. In review of the guiding statute RUS Telecom and Electric Borrowers are not restricted to DLT loans only.
3. The Agency is now making broadband facilities an eligible grant purpose. In the past, to leverage appropriations to their fullest, the Agency restricted transmission facilities from being an eligible purpose and focused the program on end user equipment. In today’s environment, broadband facilities have become an integral part of providing distant learning and telemedicine services and therefor the Agency has decided to include them as an eligible grant purpose.

4. In 7 CFR part 1703, 7 CFR part 1734 and 7 CFR part 1735 make administrative updates to reflect changes affected by this rule.

Non-statutory changes:

1. Relocate the DLT Loan and Grant Program from 7 CFR part 1703, subparts D, E, F and G to 7 CFR part 1734, subparts A, B, C, and D.
2. In 7 CFR part 1703, subpart D (newly designated 7 CFR part 1734, subpart A), remove the definitions of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC), and Champion Community.
3. In 7 CFR part 1703, subpart E (newly designated 7 CFR part 1734, subpart B), remove points for scoring the criteria from the code of Federal Regulations (CFR) which is used for determining the competitive need and eligibility among submitted applications. Instead, publish the points for scoring the criteria in the application guide and on the program Web site, and update as needed. This change is being made to allow the DLT program to keep up with changes in the industry and the landscape in rural America.
4. In Subparts E, F and G (newly designated 7 CFR part 1734, subparts B, C, and D), remove references to the publication of notices in the Federal Register. In order to reduce time required to announce the program on an annual basis, the agency will no longer publish these notices and will ensure that all pertinent information related to the application period is posted in the annual funding opportunity posted on Grants.gov, as required by 2 CFR 200.203, and include the information on the program Web site and in the program application guide, which will be linked to the funding opportunity posting.

Application Guide changes:

1. Scoring categories have been revised. There are now 4 potential scoring categories, 3 objective and one subjective, with a maximum of 110 points. The scoring categories are Rurality (40 points), Economic Need (30 points), Special Considerations (10 points) and Service Need and Benefits (30 points).
2. Economic Need will be scored using the US Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) data. SAIPE is the U.S. Census Bureau's program used to project annual estimates of income and poverty statistics for school districts, counties, and states.
3. Site licenses and maintenance contracts have been added to the list of approved grant purposes (7 CFR 1734.21). Additionally, the 3-year allowable coverage for extended warranties, site licenses and maintenance contracts has been identified as starting at the time of installation of the related equipment. The coverage is only for the support of

eligible equipment purchased for the project. Licenses for equipment not included as part of the project are not eligible, including licenses for WebEx, Jabber, or similar conferencing applications.

4. Purchasing and installing broadband facilities has been added to the approved grant purposes. This purpose is limited to a maximum of 20 percent of the requested grant amount and must be used for providing distance learning or telemedicine services. The awardee must own the final broadband asset in order for funding to be approved.
5. The required leveraging, or more commonly referred to as match, has been reduced to a flat 15% of the grant amount requested. Leveraging is no longer a scored criteria. Applicants are still required to identify the form and source of the matching funds.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible for a grant, your organization must:

1. Be legally organized as an incorporated organization or partnership; an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (e); a state or local unit of government; a consortium; or other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis. Each applicant must provide written evidence of its legal capacity to contract with the Rural Utilities Service to obtain the grant and comply with all applicable requirements.

Consortium: A consortium is a combination or group of entities formed to undertake the purposes for which the distance learning and telemedicine financial assistance is provided.

- If the applicant is an existing established consortium with the legal ability to contract with the Federal Government, that organization can apply in the name of the formal consortium.
 - If the applicant is an informal consortium which by itself lacks the legal capacity to contract with the Federal Government, each individual entity must contract with RUS in its own behalf.
 - An informal consortium may have a legally organized host organization which will apply on behalf of the consortium and be designated as the project owner with all awardee responsibilities.
2. Either operate a rural community facility, or deliver distance learning or telemedicine 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 is passed through to such entities or to residents of rural areas.

Per 2 CFR 200.319 (a), contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, and invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements.

Equipment vendors, manufacturers, system integrators, and other businesses whose purpose in the proposal is to sell equipment or technological services to support applicants cannot themselves be applicants or affiliates of the applicant. If the grant writer for the application is paid by a vendor, manufacturer, system integrator, or other business, the vendor, manufacturer, system integrator or other business becomes an affiliate of the applicant and cannot participate in the project.

Note: Electric or telecommunications borrowers financed through the Rural Utilities Service are eligible for grants.

Eligible Grant Purposes:

There are three categories of eligible purposes:

1. **Acquiring, by lease or purchase, eligible equipment.** If leased, the cost of the lease during the three-year life of the grant is eligible.

The following are examples of eligible equipment. This list is not exhaustive. Neither does it convey blanket eligibility. A computer is not automatically eligible. It must be used for an eligible purpose. Remember also that the purpose of the DLT Grant program is to deliver education or medicine between remote sites via telecommunications, not simply to furnish educational or medical technology.

- Computer hardware and software
- Site licenses and maintenance contracts
- Extended warranties (up to 3 years)
- Audio and video equipment
- Computer network components
- Telecommunications terminal equipment
- Data terminal equipment
- Interactive audio/video equipment
- Inside wiring
- Broadband facilities, if owned by the applicant

In general, equipment not electronically interconnected to the grant and match funded equipment is not eligible. The application must demonstrate both that the predominant purpose (50% or more of use) of every line-item in the grant and match budget meets the DLT Grant definition of distance learning and/or telemedicine,

NOTE: All equipment purchased for this Project must be new or non-depreciated.

2. **Acquiring instructional programming** that is a capital asset (including the purchase or lease of instructional programming already on the market). Renewals of instructional programming are not eligible nor is classroom equipment (such as laboratory equipment). Also, expenses (such as those for tuition, fees for coursework on a per course basis, or fees for cultural events or virtual field trips) are not capital assets and therefore, are not eligible.
3. **Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment,** including any related software; developing instructional programming that is a capital asset and providing engineering or environmental studies relating to the establishment or expansion of the phase of the project to be financed with the grant. The costs for this category cannot exceed 10% of the grant amount requested.

Ineligible Grant Purposes:

The following purposes are considered ineligible grant purposes (see 7 CFR 1734.23):

- To pay for medical or educational equipment not having telemedicine or distance learning as its essential function; including telephone systems.
- To pay for Electronic Medical Records (EMS) systems.
- To pay salaries, wages, or employee benefits to medical or educational personnel;
- To pay for the salaries or administrative expenses of the applicant or the project;
- To purchase equipment that will be owned by the local exchange carrier or another telecommunications service provider unless that service provider is the applicant.
- To duplicate facilities providing distance learning or telemedicine services in place or to reimburse the applicant or others for costs incurred prior to RUS' receipt of the completed application;
- To pay costs of preparing the application package for financial assistance under this program;
- For projects whose sole objective is to provide links between teachers and students or between medical professionals who are located at the same facility or campus environment;
- For site development and the destruction or alteration of buildings;
- For the purchase of land, buildings, or building construction;
- For projects located in areas covered by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.);

- For any purpose that the Administrator has not specifically approved;
- Except for leases provided for in §1734.21, to pay **the cost of recurring or operating expenses for the project including but not limited to internet connection fees;**
- For any other purposes not specifically contained in §1734.21.

Additionally, except as otherwise provided in §1734.12, grants shall not be used to finance a project, in part, when the success of the project is dependent upon the receipt of additional financial assistance under this subpart **or is dependent upon the receipt of other financial assistance that is not assured.**

Additional Eligibility Criteria:

1. **Minimum Rurality Score:** In order to be eligible to receive a grant, an application must receive a minimum of 20 points as an average score for all end user sties included in the project. See instructions beginning on Page 17 for computing the Rurality Score.
2. **Matching Contribution:** The grant applicant's matching contribution must equal 15 percent of the grant amount requested and be used for eligible grant purposes. See instructions beginning on Page 20 for more information on the Matching Contribution.

Other Considerations:

Rural Areas: The intent of the DLT program is to benefit rural areas (populations of 20,000 or less). We recognize that some projects could include end users in more urbanized areas, however; the Agency will evaluate projects based on their benefit to rural areas.

Online Education Services: Because this program is intended to fund end-user equipment at specifically identified sites, applications which propose to provide only web-based services which are universally available are considered ineligible. This type of project does not have a defined service area and the beneficiaries can be located anywhere, including urban areas.

Grant Limits

The minimum Grant amount which can be requested is \$50,000. The maximum Grant amount which can be requested is \$500,000.

Grant Review Process

1. **Grant Receipt:** Completed applications must be postmarked, hand-delivered, or submitted through www.grants.gov by the specified submission date in order to be considered for funding.

2. **Incomplete Applications:** RUS may request additional information that would not change the application or scoring, in order to complete the appropriate documents covering financial assistance.
3. **Scoring:** All complete applications will be scored in accordance with the criteria set forth in this guide, on the program website and the grants.gov website. All applicants will be notified in writing of the score each application receives along with a tentative minimum required score to receive financial assistance.
4. **Ineligible Applications:** Applicants with applications that are deemed ineligible will be notified of such at the end of the scoring process.
5. **Appeals:** RUS Telecommunications and Electric Borrowers may appeal the decision to reject their application. Any appeal must be made, in writing, within 10 days after the applicant is notified of the determination to deny the application.
6. **Selection Process:** Applications will be selected for approval based on scores assigned, availability of funds, and the provisions of § 1734.27.

Regardless of the number of points an application receives, the Administrator may take any of the following actions:

- a) Limit the number of applications selected for projects located in any one State during a fiscal year.
 - b) Limit the number of selected applications for a particular type of project.
 - c) Select an application receiving fewer points than another application if there are insufficient funds during a particular funding period to select the higher scoring application. If the Administrator makes this kind of selection and it affects your application, we will provide you an opportunity to reduce the amount of your grant request to the amount of funds available.
7. **Legal Documents:** All grantees will be required to execute a standard DLT Grant Agreement. A standard form of this agreement can be found on our website under the Forms and Resources tab at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>

Completing the Grant Application

This section addresses all the information that must be submitted in order for an application to be deemed complete and considered for funding. Please make sure that all the necessary information is included in the appropriate section. All the required forms and certifications are included in Appendix A to this Guide

- A. Standard Form 424 w/Attachment
- B. An Executive Summary of the Project
- C. Scoring Criteria Documentation
- D. Matching Requirements
- E. Scope of Work
- F. Financial Information and Sustainability
- G. Statement of Experience
- H. Telecommunications System Plan
- I. Compliance with other Federal Statutes
- J. Evidence of Legal Authority and Existence
- K. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation
- L. Consultation with USDA State Director and State Strategic Plan Conformity
- M. Supplemental Information

A. Standard Form 424 w/Attachment

There is one attachment to the SF-424, the Site Worksheet (required). Some of the information requested on the Site Worksheets such as population and congressional districts can be obtained at the US Census web site. Further guidance on navigating the US Census website is available in Appendix B.

The application must be signed by an authorized representative of the organization who has the authority to commit the organization's resources to carry out the project for the term of the grant. If the application is submitted through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application must be the authorized representative. If the authorized representative is not a corporate officer, evidence must be included that demonstrates that the signer has authority to obligate the organization.

B. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary gives reviewers their first overall view of the project area, the problems that residents face, and how the proposed project will address those problems. This is your opportunity to discuss the core aspects of the project. It should contain a concise description of the project including:

1. A description of why the project is needed;
2. An explanation of how the applicant will address the need cited, why the applicant requires the financial assistance, the types of education or medical services to be offered by the projects, and the benefits to rural resident;
3. A description of the applicant, documenting eligibility;
An explanation of the total project cost including a breakdown of the grant required and the source of matching contribution and other financial assistance for the remainder of the project;

4. A statement specifying whether the project is either a distance learning or telemedicine facility as defined in § 1734.3. If the project provides both distance learning and telemedicine services, the applicant must identify the predominant use of the system;
5. A statement specifying whether the project is requesting special consideration points for STEM education or Opioid treatment;
6. A general overview of the telecommunications system to be developed, including the types of equipment, technologies, and facilities used;
7. A description of the participating hubs and end user sites and the number of rural residents that will be served by the project at each end user site;
8. A certification by the applicant that facilities constructed with grants do not duplicate adequate established telemedicine or distance learning services; and
9. A listing of the location of each end user site (city, town, village, borough, or rural areas) plus the State.

At the end of the Executive Summary, please provide a section titled **“Publicly Releasable Project Description”** which contains the following information:

1. Title of the Project
2. Description of the proposed end-user site(s)
3. A brief description of project

Any information included in this section may be released to interested parties inquiring about your application, so please provide an adequate description of the project, but do not include any information you would object being released to the public. Please clearly denote the section which you agree is publicly releasable, including where the releasable description begins AND ends.

C. Scoring Criteria Documentation

The DLT Grant Program is a competitive program. Applications are scored in **objective** and **subjective** categories. The table below lists each DLT category, and the maximum points available.

Objective Criteria

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|
| C-1 | Rural Area (Rurality): | This category based on Census population data (up to 40 Points). |
| C-2 | Economic Need (SAIPE): | This category is based on the U.S. Census Bureau's SAIPE program used to project annual estimates of income and poverty statistics for school districts, counties, and states (up to 30 points) |
| C-3 | Special Consideration: | RUS will offer special consideration to applications that have the primary purpose of STEM education or opioid treatment. Such applications will be awarded 10 points |

Subjective Criteria

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| C-4 | Need for Services and Project Benefits (Needs & Benefits): | This criterion compares the specific need for the technology in the proposed service territory, and how the proposed project will address those needs and benefit the residents of the area affected. (up to 30 Points) |
|-----|---|---|

C-1 Rurality – Up to 40 Points

The Rurality score is based on the population size of each community where an end user site is located. For non-fixed site projects and projects which contain non-fixed components, the Rurality score will be based on the population of the Hub site. Applicants can use Census population data either from the Census FactFinder Website or from Rand McNally Atlas (Atlas) that cites the 2010 Census as its source for population statistics. Population figures used in the 2018 DLT Grant competition must use the 2010 Census as the source, whether it is from the Atlas, or from the FactFinder Website.

Please use the Rurality Worksheet to calculate your Rurality Score. The Worksheet is available as an Excel worksheet at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx.

Include the population statistics and rurality calculations for all sites, including those you have designated as (pure) hubs. Use the following definitions for assistance in designating the type of site:

Hub Sites: A hub site is a facility that is part of a network or telecommunications system that provides educational or medical services to end user sites. A pure hub receives no end user benefits. The site is usually a connection management point or is exclusively an educational or medical source of distance learning or telemedicine.

End-User Site: An end-user site is a facility that is part of a network or telecommunications system that is utilized by end users. In order for a site to be included as an end-user site for scoring purposes, the applicant must demonstrate that equipment purchased from the proceeds of the grant will be installed or placed at the site.

A **Hub/End-User** site performs both functions: a hub which also accommodates end-users.

The following classifications define the various population levels determining the Rurality score.

EXCEPTIONALLY RURAL AREA – 5,000 and under: 40 Points. Any area of the USA not included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants.

RURAL AREA – 5,001-10,000: 30 Points. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 inhabitants.

MID-RURAL AREA – 10,001-20,000: 20 Points. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.

URBAN AREA - Over 20,000: 0 Points. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.

Use the **Rurality Worksheet** to enter: 1) the name you have given to the site; 2) the town, city, or *Census Designated Place within a state* where the site is located; 3) the population (2010 Census) of the town, city or Census Designated Place; and 4) the *Rurality* score (as derived from the Population-to-Score table).

Although pure hubs are not included in the calculation, except in the case of Non-fixed end-user applications and hybrid applications, the Agency will need this data to recalculate the score if

there appears to be end user beneficiaries at the site. Place the sites in the same order and use the same numbering as on the *Site Worksheet* (and which will be used on the *SAIPE Worksheet*).

If any end user sites are not within the boundaries of a town or a *place* that cannot be identified by 2010 Census or found in the listing of cities, towns, and places in the Rand McNally, there is a possibility that your community is so rural that it is not associated with any Census-recognized community. If this is the case, the location would be considered by the RUS DLT Program as ‘Census Rural’ and be reported as an “Exceptionally Rural Area”.

Adding up Individual Scores for an Overall *Rurality* Score

After you have entered all your sites and the corresponding populations on the *Rurality Worksheet* calculate your estimated score by taking the average of the scores you designated as end users or hub/end-users. Do not include pure hubs in the calculation. *Exception:* Non-fixed End-User applications only use hub sites in the calculation and Hybrid Projects use hub sites for the non-fixed portion of the service area.

Rounding

Scores should be shown with their decimals rounded to 2 decimal places (i.e., 30.49999 rounds to 30.50).

C-2 Economic Need – Up to 30 Points

Economic Need is measured by the latest County SAIPE, poverty percentage, all ages, data found at [US Census SAIPE data](#) . This criterion will be used to evaluate the relative financial need of the applicant, community, and project. All applicants are required to provide the applicable SAIPE percentage based on the county where the hub and end user sites (as defined in §1734.3) are located.

Please use the Economic Need Worksheet to calculate your score. The Worksheet is available as an Excel worksheet at https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx

The *Economic Need* score is based on **SAIPE data for the COUNTY where the end-user sites are located**. *Exception:* Non-fixed End-User applications only use Hub sites in the calculation and Hybrid Projects use Hub sites for the Non-fixed portion of the service area. The SAIPE data used is from the column “**poverty percentage, all ages**”.

Determining the Economic Need Score:

The project SAIPE percentage will be determined by the weighted average of the county percentages for all of the end user sites. For purposes of averaging, if a hub is also utilized as an end user site, the hub will be considered as an end user site.

The applicant will receive points as follows:

County SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 30 percent - **30 points**

County SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 20 percent but less than 30 percent - **20 points**

County SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 10 percent but less than 20 percent - **10 points**

County SAIPE percentage less than 10% percent - **0 points**

How is the score calculated?

1. The “Average SAIPE” entered on the *Economic Need Worksheet* is the average of the relevant eligibility percentages for all the hub/end-user and end-user sites. When calculating the average, use the eligibility percentages exactly as presented in the Census data, one decimal place.
2. Do not round: After calculating the average, enter it in the “Average SAIPE” block on the Economic Need Worksheet.
3. Use the scoring table below (it also appears on the Economic Need Worksheet) to enter the score in the “Applicant’s Estimated Economic Need Score” block.

<u>SAIPE County Percentage:</u>	<u>Points</u>
SAIPE < 10%	0
10% ≤ SAIPE < 20%	10
20% ≤ SAIPE < 30%	20
30% ≤ SAIPE	30

Example of Economic Need Calculation

Epsilon Central Community College (Central) will link itself, a community library, and two rural schools to the Deepwoods Nature Center for the purpose of receiving instructor led environmental courses via videoconferencing. The Deepwoods Nature center is the source of the distance learning content and will not receive any content from the other sites. As such, it is a pure (educational) hub and the SAIPE data will not be used in the calculation. However, **the applicant must still provide the data** for the hub site (if the Agency were to determine that the site is also an end-user, it can recalculate the score). Central will be the electronic hub of the network, and will receive distance learning content from the Nature Center. As such, that site is

categorized as a hub/end-user. The average of the four relevant percentages is 17.5%. The applicant refers to the scoring table and will enter 10 points in the “Applicant’s Estimated Economic Need Score” block.

C-3 Special Consideration – 10 Points

RUS will offer special consideration to applications that have STEM education or opioid treatment as their primary purpose. Such applications will be awarded 10 points. Special Consideration points must be specifically requested using the sample Special Consideration Worksheet or a similar document. The sample worksheet is also available as an Excel worksheet at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx. **The applicant must provide the Special Consideration Worksheet in order to be awarded the additional points.**

The special consideration purpose must be fully defined in the Executive Summary and the Needs and Benefits sections of the application. The applicant should identify any certifications, credentials, or other relevant specialized training that demonstrates the ability of the instructors/councilors/medical professionals to provide the STEM education or opioid treatment.

STEM

For the purpose of the DLT program, STEM education is defined as education in the various science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines. STEM encompasses a wide range of academic and technical subjects, including the physical sciences, life sciences, natural sciences, information technology, engineering and mathematics education. STEM includes health care programs that train students for careers in the medical or scientific research fields. STEM also includes career/technical education and apprenticeships in any of the STEM fields, which can be considered Applied STEM.

STEM education eligible purposes include:

- Classes offering STEM curriculum
- Training in STEM fields, including apprenticeships and instructor training
- Laboratory or other equipment that contributes to the live interactive STEM curriculum

Opioid Treatment

For the purpose of the DLT program, opioid treatment is defined as the interactive communication between medical or educational professionals and opioid users or their families, other treatment professionals or those who interact with opioid users.

Opioid treatment eligible purposes include:

- Counseling of opioid users
- Treatment of opioid dependent persons

- Training of medical professionals, counselors or first responders in the interaction with opioid users.
- Education programs addressing opioid abuse

C-4 Need for Service and Project Benefits – Up to 30 Points

This criterion measures the extent to which the proposed project meets the need for distance learning or telemedicine services in rural areas, benefits derived from the services proposed by the project, and local community involvement in planning, implementing, and financial assistance of the project.

RUS will consider the extent of the applicant's documentation explaining the economic, education, or health care challenges facing the community; the applicant's proposed plan to address these challenges; how the grant can help; and why the applicant cannot complete the project without a grant. RUS will also consider the extent to which the applicant provides evidence that economic, education, or health care challenges could not be addressed without employing advanced technology. RUS will also consider any support by recognized experts in the related educational or health care field, any documentation substantiating the educational or health care underserved nature of the applicant's proposed service area, and any justification for specific educational or medical services which are needed and will provide direct benefits to rural residents.

Some examples of benefits to be provided by the project include, but are not limited to:

1. Improved educational opportunities for a specified number of students;
2. Travel time and money saved by telemedicine diagnoses;
3. Number of doctors retained in rural areas;
4. Number of additional students electing to attend higher education institutions;
5. Lives saved due to prompt medical diagnoses and treatment;
6. New education courses offered, including college level courses;
7. Expanded use of educational facilities such as night training;
8. Number of patients receiving telemedicine diagnoses;
9. Provision of training, information resources, library assets, adult education, lifetime learning, community use of technology, jobs, connection to region, nation, and world.

Other matters that will be considered by RUS under this criterion include:

1. That rural residents, and other beneficiaries, desire the educational or medical services to be provided by the project. A strong indication of need is the willingness of local end users or institutions, to the extent possible, to contribute to the capital costs of establishing the project. This could include letters of financial commitment toward the project from local institutions.

2. The extent of the project's planning, development, and support by local residents and institutions. This may include evidence of community involvement, as exemplified in community meetings, public forums, and surveys. In addition, applicants should provide evidence of local residents' participation in the project planning and development. Additionally, a complete project may require items that are ineligible as grant or match, such as a building addition or a vehicle for mobile telemedicine. Although not eligible for in-kind matching credit, any kind of financial support and contributions from the local community (other than the applicant) does show evidence of the commitment of the community to the project.
3. The extent to which the application addresses the problems of population out-migration and how the project seeks to slow, halt, or prevent population loss.

Need for Services

Clearly state the economic, geographic, educational, or health care challenges facing the project's respective communities, and provide any documentation that demonstrates the challenges. Use verifiable data and statistics to substantiate and quantify these challenges.

Demonstrate how the proposed project will help resolve these challenges and why the applicant cannot afford the project without a grant.

Document support for the project provided by professionals in the educational or health care fields. The more specific their professional opinion is regarding your situation and the proposed project as a solution, the more compelling it is. Substantiate the underserved educational or health care nature of the project's proposed service area; and justify, explain, and document the specific educational or medical services that will provide direct benefits to rural residents. Demonstrate demand by rural residents and other beneficiaries for the educational or medical services that the project would provide. Show that the project is designed to meet local community needs. Willingness of local end-users or community-based organizations to contribute to the costs of completing, operating, or maintaining the project is a strong indication of community support. Documentation of support includes letters of financial and non-financial commitment towards the project from local organizations.

Benefits Derived from Services

In addition to documenting the need for services, describe how the project would assist the community in solving these challenges. **Document the specific benefits of your project and quantify them in terms of expected outcomes.** Tie the benefits of your project DIRECTLY to the stated needs you intend to address. Provide measurable targets or goals such as estimates of the number of people that will benefit from the project.

Examples

For a distance learning project that serves secondary schools, provide the **number of schools and students** that will benefit. You should also document all other benefits provided by the project with quantifiable goals when possible such as:

- four-year foreign language availability up from 300 to 1,200 students;
- organic chemistry offered for first time to entire district;
- expanded educational facility use, such as evening vocational training;
- a reduction in the rate of high school dropouts from 17% to 12%.

For a telemedicine project that serves a group of hospitals, provide the **number of health care facilities and the potential number of patients** to benefit. You should also **document** all other benefits provided by the project such as:

- time and monetary savings to the community from telemedicine diagnoses;
- 400 patients receiving at-home monitoring;
- 4 doctors retained in your community or medical staff trained;
- lives saved due to prompt medical diagnosis.

Document any ancillary benefits or multiple uses that would create added value in the rural communities which the project will serve. Examples include training, information resources, library assets, adult education, lifetime learning, and job creation. If applicable, you can address particular community problems such as out-migration and the extent to which the project would reduce or prevent population loss.

Local community involvement in planning, implementing, and financial assistance of the project.

Address the participation by local residents and organizations in planning and developing the project. Include evidence of this participation in your application. Examples of evidence of community involvement include community meetings, public forums and surveys.

Discuss Other Projects involving DLT Awards

DLT Grants cannot be awarded to projects that duplicate facilities. If any of the sites or service territory in the project as described in the application are part of another application in FY 2018 or were part of a project funded in the previous two DLT competitions (2015 & 2016), explain any relationship between or among these projects as you discuss the specific need and benefit that will be provided by the proposed project. In particular, discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts. (Provide a more thorough discussion of project overlaps in the Telecommunications System Plan, as described above. In the absence of an explanation, overlaps in projects are assumed to be duplication and

as a consequence, the project could be rejected as ineligible or scored comparatively low in Needs and Benefits.)

In addition, applicants with previous awards should discuss the implementation of the previous award with respect to the use of funds. This is particularly true if funds from the former award have not yet been drawn down in its entirety.

D. Matching Requirements

The grant applicant's minimum matching contribution must equal 15% of the grant amount requested. Matching contributions generally must be in the form of cash. However, in-kind contributions solely for the purposes listed in §1734.21 may be substituted for cash and appropriately identified on the budget worksheet.

Funding Commitment from other sources

The applicant must provide evidence, in form and substance satisfactory to RUS, that funding agreements have been obtained to ensure completion of the project. These agreements shall be sufficient to ensure:

- a) Payment of all proposed expenditures for the project;
- b) All required matching contributions in § 1734.22; and
- c) Any other funds necessary to complete the project.

Please use the Matching Worksheet to calculate your score. The Worksheet is available as an Excel worksheet at https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx. Additionally, documentation submitted in support of the application should reflect all financial support for the project from non-Federal sources as required by §1734.22. The applicant must provide evidence, from authorized representatives of the sources, of a commitment that the funds are available and will be used for the project.

Special Matching Provisions for American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Under Federal law, applications from these areas are exempt from matching requirements up to \$200,000. The maximum DLT Grant in FY 2018 is \$500,000 and the required minimum match is 15%, or \$75,000. This means that for the FY 2018 DLT Grant Program, these areas are not required to provide a minimum match.

Eligible purposes for in-kind matching funds are identical to eligible purposes for a DLT grant.

For a line-item identified as in-kind to be eligible for match funding, the application must demonstrate:

1. The match is used for eligible purposes;
2. That none of the use is to benefit sites not shown in the scoring; and
3. That the predominant purpose (over 50% of use) of that line-item is for purposes which meet the DLT grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine.

If any part of an in-kind line-item is for ineligible purposes, the line-item cannot be budgeted for match. To be eligible, items proposed as match must be integral to the project in exactly the same way as items the applicant proposes to obtain with the grant. The technology purchased with DLT grant monies or credited as in-kind match items are intended to build distance learning and/or telemedicine systems that would not otherwise be financially possible if not for the grant.

Federal funds are not eligible as matching funds. E-rate funds are federal funds and cannot be applied as matching funds to a DLT project.

Special Matching Provisions for projects located in eligible counties under Counties in Appalachia. If counties in your proposed project are any of the counties eligible under this provision you may use ARC funds toward your matching contribution. Please see www.arc.gov for a list of eligible counties under the Counties in Appalachia heading. Applying ARC funds as a match requires coordination with ARC State Program Managers and States in the Region. See the ARC Members, Partners and Staff link also at www.arc.gov for ARC State Program Managers contact information. DLT applicants considering an ARC match are strongly encouraged to contact their ARC State Program Manager(s) early in the process to explore the feasibility of an ARC grant.

Use of non-Federal Grants as Matching Funds: To document the match, include a copy of the announcement letter from the grantor. The letter from the grantor must be explicit about the purpose of the grant and not have limitations or exclusions and the funds must be available at the time of application submission. If you intend to apply another grant as matching funds toward the DLT Grant application, include a letter from the grantor stating that the money in that grant is available and can be applied to the purposes of the DLT Grant.

Types of Matching Funds

Cash

Most applicants propose to provide a cash match for the project. When this occurs, reimbursements for approved purposes are made on a pro-rata basis with the applicant being reimbursed for 85% of the presented invoiced cost.

In-Kind Match

An in-kind match must be integral to and necessary for the DLT project, not simply a technology purchase made in the same timeframe. Unlike cash, in-kind matches are tied directly to the eligibility of the proposed in-kind item. **Should we determine that the item is not eligible or not integral and necessary for the project, the item would be removed from the grant and match budget and the proposed match would not be credited.** This could make the application ineligible.

In-kind items must be non-depreciated or new assets, not installed, with established monetary values.

Costs incurred by the applicant, or others on behalf of the applicant, for facilities or equipment installed, or other services rendered prior to submission of a completed application, shall not be considered as an eligible in-kind matching contribution.

In-kind match from vendors is not eligible.

Funding Commitments

The applicant must provide, in form and substance satisfactory to RUS, that funding agreements have been obtained to ensure completion of the project. These agreements, which must be placed in this section of the Application, shall be sufficient to ensure:

- a) Payment of all proposed expenditures for the project;
- b) All required matching contribution as required by 1734.22;
- c) Any additional funding provided in accordance with §1734.25(g).

Match Documentation Specifics - The applicant must document the project's proposed matching funds in form and substance satisfactory to the Agency. The documentation must be placed under Tab D of your application. Each proposed match entry on the Leveraging Worksheet must be supported by a signed letter from the entity proposing the match, including when the entity is the applicant.

1. **Be signed by a person capable of obligating the donor organization.** Include the printed name and title of the person signing the letter. The letter must clearly indicate the name of the donor organization and state that the funds are committed to the proposed DLT project as described in the Budget and elsewhere in the application. If the name and title do not appear on the donor organization's letterhead, attach evidence of the signer's authority to obligate the funds.
2. **If the match is cash, state the dollar amount.** Letters without a stated cash amount cannot be credited as a cash match.
3. **If the proposed match is in-kind,** state the actual dollar amount and give a complete description of the donation identified by the line-item number in the budget and the expected date of purchase. Letters that do not identify the line-items in the budget cannot be credited as an in-kind match. Keep in mind that items acquired before the application submission date are not eligible for grant or match. Also, demonstrate how the established monetary value of the item was determined. Applicants that do not submit adequate documentation for in-kind match as specified will have their in-kind match disallowed. Proposed matches must be consistent on the SF-424, the Budget, and the Matching Worksheets.

E. Scope of Work

Provide a narrative (with charts, if needed) explaining the Scope of Work. Make a clear and convincing presentation of how you will achieve the goals of your project. The scope of work completes the picture for the reviewer. It discusses how your organization proposes to proceed with the project. **An application that does not include a scope of work cannot be evaluated and could be returned as ineligible.**

The scope of work must include, at a minimum, the following:

1. The **specific activities** to be performed under the project;
2. **Who** will carry out the activities;
3. The **timeframes** for accomplishing the project objectives and activities; and
4. A **budget** for all capital expenditures reflecting the line item costs for approved purposes for both the grant funds and the matching funds for the project. Separately, the budget must specify any line item costs that are nonapproved purposes for grants as contained in §1734.23.

Additional Guidance for the Budget: The budget is a required document for RUS to evaluate an application. The Budget worksheet with instructions is available in Appendix A. An excel

spreadsheet for completing the budget is also available on our website at:
<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>

- a) Your Budget should show each cost as a **line-item**. The items listed and described in your Telecommunications System Plan (Section G) should track line-by-line with the entries in your budget.
- b) Do not combine items into lump sums that cannot be evaluated individually by the Agency. The individual parts have to be evaluated for cost comparison and program eligibility.
- c) Provide detail such as the brand and model number, i.e., “VideoKing TX-90, \$5,600,” as opposed to “One Video System, \$75,000 each site;” Installation,” \$50,000; or “Wiring, \$100,000.”
- d) If, in your project, you have to pay a user fee or a license fee that is required to use grant or match purchased equipment, it must be presented as such in the application.

Examples:

The following are some abbreviated examples to use as guidance in completing the budget worksheet. They are not all inclusive of the equipment needed for a complete DLT project.

- Weaver County Memorial Hospital is installing remote diagnostic systems in 2 small rural urgent care centers throughout the county to provide telemedicine services. This will involve the purchase of a diagnostic system for each site plus computers. The hospital board agreed to contribute \$14,870 to the project.
- Gretchen County Community College is proposing a distance learning project with three high schools to provide advanced placement courses. Each school has agreed to provide the needed ceiling mount projectors at their respective site. The predominate DLT use of the projectors has been justified in the Technical Service Plan and the projectors have been included as in-kind match on the Matching Worksheet and properly described as in-kind match in the funding commitment letters.

F. Financial Information and Sustainability

The applicant must provide a narrative description demonstrating the feasibility of the project, including having sufficient resources and expertise necessary to undertake and complete the project and, how the project will be sustained following completion of the project.

The application needs to show that funding is available for the three-year period that it takes to put together the project (required for eligibility), and to ensure the project’s continuance as a viable community resource.

Provide a narrative description that addresses your project’s feasibility. The narrative should include a description of the project’s leadership, its technical expertise, and how leadership and technical expertise is distributed throughout all of the sites or the service territory. Describe how

the flow of funds and institutional financial support (local government, businesses, school system, university or foundation) will sustain the project and maintain a continuity of service. Your narrative should include all assumptions and the following information:

- A description of the project's revenues and expenses in the project budget;
- Evidence of cost sharing arrangements among hub and end-user sites, if applicable;
- Identification of any other items that may affect feasibility or sustainability of the project.

G. Statement of Experience

Provide a written narrative describing your organization's demonstrated capability and experience in operating an educational or health care endeavor and any project similar to the proposed project. Experience in a similar project is desirable but not required. If your organization does not have experience with projects similar to the proposed project, you should explain how you plan to overcome this.

H. Telecommunications System Plan

A telecommunications system plan consisting of the following:

1. The capabilities of the telecommunications terminal equipment, including a description of the specific equipment which will be used to deliver the proposed service. The applicant must document discussions with various technical sources which could include consultants, engineers, product vendors, or internal technical experts, provide detailed cost estimates for operating and maintaining the end user equipment and provide evidence that alternative equipment and technologies were evaluated.
2. A complete listing of the proposed telecommunications terminal equipment, telecommunications transmission facilities, data terminal equipment, interactive video equipment, computer hardware and software systems, and components that process data for transmission via telecommunications, computer network components, communication satellite ground station equipment, or any other elements of the telecommunications system designed to further the purposes of this subpart, that the applicant intends to build or fund using RUS financial assistance.
3. A description of the consultations with the appropriate telecommunications carriers (including other interexchange carriers, cable television operators, enhanced service providers, providers of satellite services and telecommunications equipment manufacturers and distributors) and the anticipated role of such providers in the proposed telecommunications system.

4. A successful DLT grant application includes a well-planned TSP, starting with a diagram or map of the proposed system overlaid with a geographic map of the service area. Also included in the TSP are other diagrams (if necessary), technical descriptions, and a narrative accounting of each item in the budget.
5. The TSP shows the sites (hubs, hub/end-users, or end-users) that will participate in the project and where the equipment will be located. It shows how the equipment is interconnected and how the distance learning or telemedicine benefits flow from the hub sites to the rural end user sites.

Telecommunications System Plan Map/Diagram and Narrative

System Plan Map/Diagram

Attach a map or a drawing which is a spatial representation of the service area encompassing the project, displaying an overlay of your proposed distance learning or telemedicine system, including hub sites and end users. This map can be displayed as a series of maps containing an overview, followed by close-up maps of individual sites.

Each site, hub and end user, must be represented on the map. This representation need not be to scale, but it must be representational of your project, not generic. These generic network diagrams, usually depicting some kind of campus architecture are by themselves insufficient. However, applicants can provide a network diagrams (without geographic references) if they can also provide geographic maps that reference the diagram. Nevertheless, an application that does not contain a map that shows each site could be difficult to evaluate thereby losing competitive value when compared to applications that present visual clarity of their project.

System Plan Narrative:

Provide a narrative describing the overall DLT network and the proposed equipment's use in the network. Detail each item in the Scope of Work budget by line number - what it is, how it will be used in the network and how does it qualify as a DLT use. Provide justification of the equipment based on discussions with technical experts. Discuss any possible duplication of other DLT efforts and how this project avoids such duplication. Discuss the applicant's involvement in any previous USDA DLT grants or current USDA DLT grant application.

- Some items requested for DLT funding will have more general uses than other equipment, which may have 100% distance learning or tele-medical purposes. For each item, specify the percentage of use that can be attributed to purposes that meet the DLT grant definition of distance learning and/or telemedicine, explain how you've determined those percentages and addressing the capabilities of the proposed equipment/software. The percentage of use is only to be used for analysis as part of

line item explanations. Do not breakout items in the actual budget by percentage of use.

- Document your discussions with various technical sources, such as consultants, engineers, product vendors or internal technical experts.
- Address whether or not any part of the project will duplicate any adequate, established telemedicine or distance learning services already in operation. In particular, discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts. Describe the status of previous projects and, in particular, the extent to which the funds have been drawn for eligible grant purposes. Please note that you will need to complete a Non-duplication of Services Certificate, which is part of the certification section. The form is located in the Toolkit.
- Identify any previous grants that the applicant has received from our Agency in the previous three grant cycles (2015, 2016, and 2017) and how they would affect the project proposed in the current application.
- This applies not only to prior grants received by the current applicant, but to grant funding that may have gone to any of the end-users in the current proposal via a grant received by another entity.
- Discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts. Specify the progress/status of any previous awards and the extent of grant and match funds expended toward completing those projects.
- Discuss whether or not any of the sites in the current project are included as participants in another application for a Fiscal Year 2018 DLT Grant.
- In the absence of any explanation, overlaps in projects are assumed to be duplication and, as a consequence, scores could be negatively affected in the criterion of Needs and Benefits.

Failure to provide a well written and thorough Technical Service Plan may result in your application being rejected.

I. Compliance with other Federal Statutes

Appendix A contains certification forms to demonstrate compliance with other Federal statutes and regulations. There are ten required certifications and we have numbered them I-1 through I-10 so that you can see at a glance if they are all in your application. Applications submitted without a non-duplication certification will be assumed that the project is duplicative in the services offered and will be returned as ineligible.

Forms can be found on our website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>

Important Note: If you are applying as a consortium which does not have the legal authority to apply (See Eligibility Requirements on Page 7 of the Application Guide with respect to Legal Eligibility), each entity that comprises the consortium must provide a set of these certifications.

- I-1** Assurance Agreement
- I-2** Certificate Regarding Debarment and Suspension rules
- I-3** Certification Regarding Lobbying for Contracts
- I-4** Certification regarding a Drug-Free Workplace
- I-5** Certificate regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions
- I-6** Certification regarding Federal Collection Policies for Commercial Debt
- I-7** Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970
- I-8** Certificate Regarding Architectural Barriers
- I-9** AD3030 Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants
- I-10** Non-Duplication of Services Certificate

J. Evidence of Legal Existence and Authority to Contract with the Federal Government

Evidence of Legal Existence and Authority to Contract with the Federal Government is demonstrated by an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM). The SAM registration must be in place on or before the date of application submittal and must remain active, with current information, at all times during the time when an entity has an application under consideration by an agency or when the entity has an active Federal award. To remain registered in the SAM database after the initial registration, applicants are required to review and update, on an annual basis, from the date of the initial registration or any subsequent updates made to their information, the SAM database to ensure it is current, accurate and complete.

To complete this section of the application, provide the SAM Cage Code assigned when you registered. For this schedule, please provide a printout of your organization's SAM registration, which clearly identifies the CAGE code assigned by SAM.gov and confirms the registration was active before the application was submitted. The Entity Name and DUNS Number must be for the applicant. **It cannot be for a parent, subsidiary or other affiliated company.**

Additional Guidance for Consortia:

- a) If the applicant is an existing established consortium with the legal ability to contract with the Federal Government, the consortium must provide the above documentation;
- b) If the applicant is an informal consortium which by itself lacks the legal capacity to contract, the applicant must have a legally organized host organization which is part of the consortium. That host must submit the required documentation.

Under this approach, if the entity receives an award and does not take steps to establish itself as a legal entity, there are two approaches which could be taken:

- Each organization within the consortium, which must each have legal existence and the legal authority to contract with the government, will be a party to the grant agreement and will be required to sign the document and individually supply an opinion of counsel; or
- The host organization will be legally responsible for the execution of the grant documents. This organization would be solely responsible for ownership and control of all assets acquired with the grant funds regardless of where they are installed.

K. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation

The applicant must provide details of the project's impact on the environment and historic preservation. Grants made under this part are subject to part 1794 of this chapter which contains RUS' policies and procedures for implementing a variety of Federal statutes, regulations, and executive orders generally pertaining to the protection of the quality of the human environment that are listed in 7 CFR 1794.1. The application shall contain a separate section entitled "Environmental Impact of the Project." The applicant may use the "Environmental Questionnaire," in Appendix A, to assist in complying with the requirements of this section.

For projects requesting funding of broadband facilities, an Environmental Questionnaire must be completed to provide information on environmental compliance. Applicants must complete and submit an Environmental Questionnaire (see Appendix A) in accordance with 7 CFR 1970, for any external facilities that will be constructed with Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program funds. A copy of 7 CFR Part 1970 can be retrieved from: <https://www.ecfr.gov>.

L. Consultation with USDA State Director

The applicant must provide evidence that your organization has consulted with the USDA State Director for Rural Development about the availability of other sources of funding available at the State or local level. Include this evidence as part of your application.

When requesting evidence of consultation with the USDA State Director, applicants should provide an executive summary of your grant as well as the grant and match amounts to the State Director in order for them to make an informed determination. Failure to provide this information may delay receipt of the State Director's consultation evidence.

Note: Applicants should contact the USDA State Director as early as possible in the application process. You can find a listing of the State Rural Development Offices at:
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>.

M. Supplemental Information

The applicant can use this section to provide any additional information it considers relevant to the project and likely to be helpful in determining the extent to which the project will further the purposes of the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program.

Appendix A - Forms

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Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

All applicants requesting funding under the Community Connect Grant Program must complete the Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424). Additional instructions for specific line items also are included below. The form and any attachments referenced in this Guide can also be found on our website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>.

Additional Instructions for the SF-424

Block 8: There are multiple entries in this block. We will use the contact information provided in this box for all contact and correspondence. Please complete this in full and attach a sheet if you want to provide additional contacts. It is crucial that we have accurate information, including a reliable e-mail address for rapid correspondence. Otherwise, correspondence will be sent by mail. You must provide full, accurate contact information for someone with the authority to answer any questions that RUS staff may have about your application.

If you wish to supply a contact from outside your organization, attach a letter immediately behind the SF-424 listing these items: person's name, organization, contact information (phone, fax, e-mail, mailing address), relationship to your organization. Make sure the letter contains language granting authority to the person to answer our questions or provide additional information on your behalf, and any time limit you wish to apply to that person's authority. This letter must be signed by the signatory on the SF-424.

As required by the Office of Management and Budget, all applicants for grants must supply a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. See instructions on Page 7 of this guide for assistance in obtaining a DUNS number

Block 10: The Name of the Federal Agency is Rural Utilities Service.

Block 11: The Catalog of Federal Assistance Number is 10.855.

Block 12: Funding Opportunity Number is RUS-18-01-DLT. The Title is “Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program”.

Block 14: Please use the Site Worksheet to provide this information

Block 15: Brief descriptive title of project.

Block 16: Please use the Site Worksheet to provide this information

Block 19: Please select “C” “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372”.

Block 20: You must supply an explanation of the delinquency if you check “yes”.

Block 21: Please be sure to check “I agree”. The application must be signed by an authorized representative of the organization that will own and operate the project if the grant is awarded. If the authorized representative is not a corporate officer, evidence must be included that demonstrates that the authorized representative has authority to obligate the organization. If submitted electronically through Grants.gov, the application must be submitted by the authorized representative.

Site Worksheet

The site worksheet can be found at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Site Worksheet

1. If using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at:
<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>

Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate your Sites. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all of your Sites.
2. **Site Number** – Number each Site consecutively regardless of its designation. This number should be used consistently to identify each site in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and NSLP Worksheet.
3. **Site Name** – Input the official name of the site. Use this name consistently in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and NSLP Worksheet.
4. **Site Designation** – Designated each Site as Hub, Hub/End-User, or End-User according to the guidance on Page 12 of this guide.
5. **Street Address, Town, County, State** – Input the Street Address, Town or Place Name, County and State in which the Site is located.
6. **Congressional District** – Input the Congressional District in which the Site is located. This information can be found on the House of Representatives website: www.House.gov.

Rurality Worksheet

The rurality worksheet can be found at:

https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Rurality Worksheet

1. If using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate your Sites. If you added rows you will need to copy the cell references as well in order to carry the input information from the Site Worksheet. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all of your Sites.
2. **Site Number** – Number each Site consecutively regardless of its designation. This number should be used consistently to identify each site in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and NSLP Worksheet.
4. **Site Name** – Input the official name of the site. Use this name consistently in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and NSLP Worksheet.
5. **Site Designation** – Designated each Site as Hub, Hub/End-User, or End-User according to the guidance on Page 12 of this guide.
6. **Town or Place** – Input the Town or Place Name, in which the Site is located.
7. **Population** – Input the population from the 2010 Census, guidance provided in Appendix B. If town or place is not located in the Census, or found in the listing of cities, towns, and places in the Rand McNally, there is a possibility that your community is so rural that it is not associated with any Census- recognized community. If this is the case, the location would be considered by the RUS DLT Program as ‘Census Rural’ and be reported as an “Exceptionally Rural Area”.
8. **Rurality Score** – Input the Rurality Score for each End-User or Hub/End-User site according to the following table:

EXCEPTIONALLY RURAL AREA – **5,000 and under: 40 Points**. Any area of the USA not included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants.

RURAL AREA – **5,001-10,000: 30 Points**. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 inhabitants.

MID-RURAL AREA – **10,001-20,000: 20 Points**. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.

URBAN AREA - **Over 20,000: 0 Points** . Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.

NOTE: Enter the hub and end user sites in the same order as shown on the Site Worksheet. Enter the population associated with each hub and end user site. **Do not** score or include the hub site in the final calculation of the Rurality score. The hub information is required should we determine that a hub site is actually an end user site or combination hub/end user site where it would be scored. See section C1 – Rurality on page 12 of Application Guide for additional instructions

Economic Need Worksheet

The economic need worksheet can be found at:

https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Economic Need Worksheet

1. If using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate your Sites. If you added rows you will need to copy the cell references as well in order to carry the input information from the Site Worksheet. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all of your Sites.
2. Site Number – Number each Site consecutively regardless of its designation. This number should be used consistently to identify each site in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.
3. Site Name – Input the official name of the site. Use this name consistently in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.
4. Site Designation – Designated each Site as Hub, Hub/End-User, or End-User according to the guidance on Page 12 of this guide.
5. County – Input the County in which the Site is located.
6. SAIPE Percent Poverty, All Ages – Input the percent of county residents that are impoverished as identified in the most recent US Census SAIPE spreadsheet
7. Economic Need Score – Calculate the Average SAIPE percentage and input the Economic Need Score according to the following table:

<u>SAIPE County Percentage:</u>	<u>Points</u>
SAIPE < 10%	0
10% ≤ SAIPE < 20%	10
20% ≤ SAIPE < 30%	20
30% ≤ SAIPE	30

Matching Worksheet

The matching worksheet can be found at:

https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Matching Worksheet

1. If using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate your Matching Contributions. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all of your Matching Contributions.
2. List each matching contribution and the dollar value on separate line items.
3. Input the total value of the matching contributions in Line 1 at the bottom of the sheet.
4. Input the total grant request in Line 2 at the bottom of the sheet.
5. Calculate the percent match and input in Line 3.
6. Match must be a minimum of 15%
7. You must document your matching funds as described in the Application Guide. Place letters of financial commitment and other match documentation along with this form under Tab C-3 of your application package. Each donor's match must be supported by a matching letter. Matches not properly documented will not be credited. Depending on the consequent reduction of your match, this could lower your score or make your project ineligible (i.e., if resultant match is < 15%)

Special Consideration Worksheet

1. Using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at:
<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>. Please print and sign the form, or you may print and sign the form included in this application guide.
2. Select whether the project is requesting STEM or opioid treatment special consideration.
3. The authorized representative who signs the SF424 should also sign and date this form.
4. You must document your special consideration request as described in the Application Guide. Requests for Special Consideration will not be considered if the application's accompanying Executive Summary and Needs and Benefits section do not support the contention that the project's primary purpose is STEM education or opioid treatment.
Projects that do not include the Special Consideration Worksheet will not be awarded Special Consideration Area points, regardless of any references in other portions of the application.

Budget Worksheet

The budget worksheet can be found at:

https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/DLT2018_Worksheets.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Budget Worksheet

1. If using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate your Budget items. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed.
2. Site Name – Insert Site Name, consistent with previous worksheets, where equipment will be installed.
3. Description – Provide a detailed description, such as band and model number, for the equipment to be purchased.
4. Unit Cost – Provide the cost for purchasing one unit of the equipment
5. # of Units – Provide the number of units to be purchased for the site
6. Extended Cost: Grant or Cash Match – Provide the total amount of grant and/or cash match funds which will be used to purchase the line item.
7. Extended Cost: In-Kind Match – Provide the total value of the equipment which will be provided as an in-kind match.
8. Place Totals of each column in the Totals boxes.
9. Line A is the total of the Grant/Cash Match column and the In-Kind Match column and represents the total cost of the project
10. Line B is the total amount of Cash Match contributed to the project and supported by the Leveraging Worksheet and documentation
11. Line C is the total amount of In-Kind Match contributed to the project and supported by the Leveraging Worksheet and documentation.
12. Line D is Line A minus Line B and Line C. This should reconcile with the Grant Request on the Form SF 424 Block 18 Line a. Federal.

13. Grant to Match check is the match provided on Line B + Line C divided by the grant request on Line D. This should equal a minimum of 15%.

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program: Broadband Facility

Overview

The USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is required to assess the impacts of proposed federal actions, such as the provision of financial assistance through the Community Connect Grant Program, to the human environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other federal, state, and local environmental laws. Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program applicants proposing to construct Broadband Facilities must complete an Environmental Questionnaire (EQ) and submit with their applications. The attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet can help to focus the environmental review process and the information provided as part of the EQ depending on the project activity. The EQ provides information to RUS so that it can either complete the environmental review process or determine the appropriate level of additional impact analyses needed, in accordance with RUS Environmental Policies and Procedures, 7 CFR 1970 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=be582d41f15145ec19384e8522198e33&mc=true&node=pt7.14.1970&rgn=div5>). RUS will notify applicants if additional information or analyses are necessary beyond what was submitted in the EQ.

No construction activities may begin until final environmental approval from RUS is granted. In accordance with 7 CFR § 1970.12, awardees are prohibited from taking actions that may have an adverse environmental impact or limit the choice of practicable alternatives that may be considered until RUS has concluded the environmental review process. If the proposed project involves construction activities or property acquisition, the applicant is generally prohibited from acquiring, rehabilitating, converting, leasing, repairing or constructing property or facilities, or committing or expending Agency or non-Agency funds until after RUS has concluded its environmental review requirements.

An applicant may submit to RUS a copy of any environmental review document that has been prepared in connection with obtaining permits, approvals, or other financing for the proposed project from state, local or other federal agencies. Such material, to the extent determined to be relevant, may be used to fulfill RUS environmental review requirements.

Applicants shall not reference items provided in other parts of the application package in the EQ; all materials relevant to the EQ must be integrated herein to facilitate timely review.

NOTE: It is imperative an applicant start the consultation process with applicable agencies, if required, before submitting the application. If consultation is required, but evidence that process has begun is not provided, or if special or high sensitivity issues are not adequately addressed, RUS may deem that application to be incomplete and reject the application on that basis. Engage relevant agencies early, and be aware of any significant issues before applying, consider designs that bypass sensitive areas, and work to fully address the requested information.

Requested Information

1. **Project Description and Location:** Describe all project-related construction activities, including, but not limited to, the construction or renovation of any buildings, the construction and installation of cable (buried and/or aerial), and/or the installation of telecommunications transmission facilities including construction of new towers and/or collocations. Complete descriptions, locations and mapping must be provided for each site affected by project-related construction activities (recommend U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle maps at a map scale of 1:24,000; larger scale maps may be provided for site-specific proposals). USGS maps may be obtained and purchased at the following website: <http://www.usgs.gov/pubprod/maps.html>. All project elements, if known at the time of the application, must be clearly depicted on any map provided. If appropriate, photographs or aerial photographs of site-specific proposals may be provided.
2. **Land Use:** Describe the amount of property to be cleared, excavated, fenced, or otherwise disturbed by the proposed project, and the current land use and zoning for each project site affected by construction. Document whether the proposed project is located on public land owned or managed by the federal government. For information related to federal lands see the following website (<http://navigator.blm.gov>). This website provides cadastral survey and land management information and data from the National Integrated Land System specifically the distribution of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), other survey-based data, and federal land boundaries. Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts related to land use can be found in Subpart L of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (<http://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970l.pdf>)
3. **Wetlands:** Describe and indicate whether wetlands are present on or near the project site(s) affected by proposed construction (maps of wetlands may be obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory website (<http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/>), or from soil maps obtained from the USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service's website (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/soils/home/>), focusing on areas of hydric soil(s)). If wetlands are identified within the project area, please document where the project components will be located in relation to the identified wetland areas. Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to wetlands can be found in Subpart G of Rural

Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures
(<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970g.pdf>).

4. **Threatened and Endangered Species:** Describe and indicate whether any proposed project site(s) will directly or indirectly affect any threatened, endangered or candidate species, or is/are within or near critical habitats. Applicants must provide species lists and appropriate species accounts (i.e. requisite habitat) for each county affected by construction obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's website (<https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>). Information about potential critical habitat areas should also be included and can be found on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's website noted above. The attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet gives further detail on the information to provide. Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to threatened and endangered species can be found in Subpart N of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970n.pdf>).
5. **Floodplains:** Describe and indicate whether or not any facility(ies) or site(s) are located within a 100-year or 500-year floodplain. If any project-related construction activities are within a floodplain, a copy of a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that depicts construction activities must be included. Information related to floodplains and National Flood Insurance Maps may be obtained from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) website (<https://msc.fema.gov/portal>). Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to and from floodplains can be found in Subpart F of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970f.pdf>).
6. **Coastal Areas:** Determine whether or not the project is within the boundaries of a coastal zone management area (CZMA). For boundary related and contact information related to CZMA, see National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management's website (<https://coast.noaa.gov/>). Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to coastal areas can be found in Subpart O of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970o.pdf>).
7. **Brownfields:** Determine whether the project is located within a brownfield site. Per 42 U.S.C. 9601, the term "brownfield site" means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Maps and locations of sites, facilities and properties that have been contaminated by hazardous materials and are being, or have been, cleaned up under EPA's Superfund, RCRA and/or brownfields cleanup programs can be found at the EPA's Cleanups in My Community website (<https://www.epa.gov/cleanups/cleanups-my-community>). Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts from locating projects at brownfield sites can be found in Subpart J of

Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures
(<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970j.pdf>).

Section 106 Review: Applicants are delegated the authority to initiate consultation with State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) and engage with interested tribes related to their projects. Prior to initiating any communications, please see the attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet to determine whether the proposed project will require such communication. In some cases, statewide programmatic agreements may apply, please contact RUS for more information. Detailed guidance and template letters related to evaluating impacts to historic and cultural resources can be found at Subpart H of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970h.pdf>).

Applications Not Subject to FCC Section 106 Reviews

Applicants who propose to use Federal Communications Commission (FCC) spectrum for their telecommunications towers and collocations note that the FCC has regulatory requirements for licensing radio spectrum to be carried by these facilities, and an established review process for ensuring compliance with Section 106 of NHPA. If the proposed tower or collocation will use FCC licensed spectrum, regardless of the height of the telecommunications tower, applicants must complete FCC's Section 106 review process – see: http://wireless.fcc.gov/siting/historic_preservation.html. If an application proposes a tower or collocation that will carry FCC spectrum, RUS has agreed that FCC will conduct Section 106 review for those facilities.

Applications Not Subject to FCC Section 106 Reviews or Statewide Programmatic Agreements

RUS will conduct Section 106 review for any new tower or collocation which will not carry FCC regulated spectrum and any other construction component of an application not subject to FCC review. Please follow the guidance in the attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet and in Subpart H of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures to include all applicable information in the EQ (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970h.pdf>).

Additional Assistance/Contact Information

In addition to the resource specific references provided above, general NEPA related information and guidance can be found on the CEQ website (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/>) or on the environmental section of the RUS website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/publications/environmental-studies/environmental-guidance>.

For information related to Section 106 of NHPA, see the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation website - <http://www.achp.gov/docs/CitizenGuide.pdf>.

Compliance Forms

Federal Statute/Regulation	Evidence of Compliance	Attachment
7 CFR Part 15, Subpart A	Assurance Agreement https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/ND_FormRD400-4_AssuranceAgreement.pdf	I-1
2 CFR 417 - Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension	Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters-Primary Covered Transactions https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-1047	I-2
2 CFR part 418 - New Restrictions on Lobbying	Certification Regarding Lobbying for Contracts, Grants, Loans and Cooperative Agreements Language is included on the following page, applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist.	I-3**
2 CFR 421 - Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)	Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements Alternative I- For Grantees other than Individuals https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-1049	I-4
	Certification regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions Language is included on the following page, applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist. Applicant must indicate whether or not any buildings which are part of the project fall within a 100 year flood plain.	I-5

Federal Statute/Regulation	Evidence of Compliance	Attachment
	<p>Applicant Certification Federal Collection Policies for Commercial Debt</p> <p>Language is included on the following page, applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist.</p> <p>Applicant must indicate whether or not they are delinquent on any federal debt, as per the referenced language.</p>	I-6
2 CFR part 200, as adopted by USDA through 2 CFR part 400.	<p>Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 Certification</p> <p>Language is included on the following page, applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist.</p>	I-7
	<p>Certification regarding Architectural Barriers</p> <p>Language is included on the following page, applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist.</p>	I-8
	<p>Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants</p> <p>https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad3030</p>	I-9
	<p>Non-Duplication of Services Certificate</p> <p>Language is included on the following page, applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist.</p>	I-10

****If** the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure Standard Form LLL - “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” available at:

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SFLLL-V1.1.pdf>

**Certification Regarding Lobbying for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and
Cooperative Agreements**

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant or loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. (Copies of this form may be obtained from RUS.)
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Certificate Regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions

If the project is located in an area subject to flooding, flood insurance must be provided to the extent available and required under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended by the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4001 through 4128). If applicable, the insurance must cover, in addition to the buildings, any machinery, equipment, fixtures, and furnishings contained in the buildings. Rural Utilities Service will comply with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management (3 CFR, 1977 Comp., p. 117), and 7 CFR 1970, of this chapter in considering the application for the project.

Please provide an explanation below to the following questions:

Is the project not located in a 100-year flood plain; and therefore, no Flood Insurance is required?

Or

Is the project is located in a 100-year flood plain? If yes, who is or will be providing the required insurance.

Fill in your explanation:

The Applicant hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Community Connectivity Grant Program, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance during construction and/or installation of equipment and upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

Federal Obligations Certification on Delinquent Debt

IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?

Note: Example of debts include, but are not limited to, delinquent taxes, guaranteed or direct government loans (more than 31 days past due) and other administrative debts.

If Yes, provide explanatory information.

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

FEDERAL COLLECTION POLICIES FOR COMMERCIAL DEBT

The Federal Government is authorized by law to take any or all of the following actions in the event that a borrower's loan payments become delinquent or the borrower defaults on its loan: (1) Report the borrower's delinquent account to a credit bureau; (2) Assess additional interest and penalty charges for the period of time that payment is not made; (3) Assess charges to cover additional administrative costs incurred by the Government to service the borrower's account; (4) Offset amounts owed to the borrower under other Federal programs; (5) Refer the borrower's debt to the Internal Revenue Service for offset against any amount owed to the borrower as an income tax refund; (6) Refer the borrower's account to a private collection agency to collect the amount due; and (7) Refer the borrower's account to the Department of Justice for litigation in the courts.

All of these actions can and will be used to recover any debts owed when it is determined to be in the interest of the Government to do so.

Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition

Policies Act of 1970 Certification

The Applicant assures that it will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4601-4655, and with implementing Federal regulations in 49 CFR 24 and 7 CFR 21.

Specifically, the Applicant assures that:

Whenever Federal financial assistance is used to pay for any part of the cost of a program or project which will result in the displacement of any person;

- (a) Fair and reasonable relocation payments and assistance shall be provided to or for displaced persons in accordance with sections 202, 203, and 204 of the Uniform Act,
- (b) Relocation assistance programs offering the services described in section 205 of the Uniform Act shall be provided to displaced persons, and
- (c) Within a reasonable period of time prior to displacement, comparable replacement dwellings will be available to displaced persons in accordance with section 205(c) (3) of the Uniform Act.

Certificate Regarding Architectural Barriers

All facilities financed with RUS grants that are open to the public, or in which physically handicapped persons may be employed or reside, must be designed, constructed, and/or altered to be readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons. Standards for these facilities must comply with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151 *et seq.*), and with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), (Appendix A to 41 CFR subpart 101-19.6).

As a prospective primary participant recipient of financial assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements of the above referenced law to the effect that all facilities must be readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.

The Applicant hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant and Loan Program, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

Non-Duplication of Services Certificate

As a prospective primary participant recipient of assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements that no facilities using financial assistance will duplicate adequate established telemedicine services and/or distance learning services.

The Applicant hereby certifies that as a prospective recipient under the said Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, that it will not use RUS grant funds to duplicate any adequate established services as referenced above.

(Note: Applicants and participants in DLT grant applications are sometimes applicants or participants in other current year applications or are sometime applicants or participants in projects that received awards in prior years. For guidance on disclosing such situation with respect to duplication of adequate established services, please refer to "Include the Following in your TSP" under D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan*, in Section IV of the *Application Guide*.)