



**February 5, 2019**

## **March 29<sup>th</sup> Application Deadline for Rural Business Development Grant Program**

USDA Rural Development is currently accepting applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2019 Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) program. The application deadline is Friday, March 29th.

The RBDG program supports targeted technical assistance and training to develop or expand small and emerging private businesses in rural communities or areas. Entities and organizations including communities, state agencies, nonprofit corporations, rural cooperatives, higher learning institutions, rural cooperatives and federally recognized tribes are eligible to apply for program funding.

Butler-Grundy Development Alliance received a \$19,900 RBDG award in 2018 to conduct a housing needs assessment in Butler and Grundy Counties in north central Iowa. The assessment helped local economic development leaders in their efforts to promote economic prosperity, attract and retain business and industry, while supporting community development.

Another 2018 RBDG recipient was Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge which received \$50,000 to purchase equipment for a rural learning center in Laurens. This newly established career academy program will play an important role in developing a skilled workforce while assisting in the creation of small and emerging businesses in northwest Iowa.

RBDG funds may be used for such activities as project planning, business counseling/training, technical assistance, market research, feasibility studies, professional and technical reports or product/service improvements. They may also be used to help acquire or develop land, construct or renovate buildings, establish revolving loans funds, conduct community economic development planning, as well as develop rural business incubators and launch leadership and entrepreneur training.

Applications are evaluated on such criteria as job creation to occur with local businesses, economic need in the area to be served, and consistency with local economic development priorities.

This is a competitive grant program with limited funding available. Applicants are encouraged to be conservative in their requests and leverage project costs with funds from multiple sources.

More information about the RBDG program can be found at [www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants/ia](http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants/ia), by calling (515) 284-4663, or by contacting USDA Rural Development's State Office in Des Moines or Area Offices in Albia, Atlantic, Storm Lake or Waverly.

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