Rural Cooperative Development Grants

What does this program do?

The Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) program helps improve the economic condition of rural areas by helping individuals and businesses start, expand or improve rural cooperatives and other mutually-owned businesses through Cooperative Development Centers. Grants are awarded through a national competition. Each fiscal year, applications are requested through a notice published in the **Federal Register** and through an announcement posted on **grants.gov**.

Who may apply for this program?

- Non-profit corporations
- Cooperatives
- Institutions of higher education

- Public bodies, for-profit businesses and individuals are not eligible

Matching funds requirement:

Twenty-five (25) percent of total project costs (5 percent for Native American tribally-controlled colleges and universities that were granted land-grant status under an Act of Congress in 1994).

How may funds be used?

Grant and matching funds can be used for developing and operating a Rural Cooperative Development Center. Examples of technical assistance and other services the centers provide are:

- Conducting feasibility studies
- Developing business plans
- Providing leadership and operational improvement training
- Facilitating strategic planning

A center can be located in any area, but the individuals and business assisted must be located in an eligible rural area.

How do we get started?

Before you apply:

- Request a **Data Universal Number System (DUNS)** number if your organization doesn't already have one. You should plan on requesting it at least a month before the application deadline because you'll need that number for the next pre-application step (see below).
- Register your organization with the **System for Award Management (SAM)** if you aren't already registered. The registration is free. You need to complete several steps. It's a good idea to start the registration process at least a month before any application deadline. Before you start the registration process, we suggest reading through the help materials available on the SAM website. Then, you'll need to create an account. After you create your account by setting up a user ID and password, you can register your organization. Remember, you'll need your DUNS number to complete your registration. Also, make a note of your Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code and expiration date because you'll need those for your application.

Who can answer questions?

If you have questions, you can contact **your nearest Rural Development Office**.

Will I need to send any reports if I receive a grant?

If you receive a grant, you'll need to send regular financial and performance reports. Your grant agreement will tell you

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how often you need to send the reports, what forms you need to use and what information you'll need to put in the reports.

Where can I get more information about the program?

Please read the **Federal Register Notice** for important information needed before applying for the grant, and consult the **RCDG program regulations**.