



Rural Development

January 18, 2018

Rural Business-Cooperative Service  
Business Programs  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 5803-S  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Telephone: (202) 690-4730

TO: State Directors, Rural Development

ATTENTION: Business Programs Directors

FROM: Bette B. Brand /s/ **Bette B. Brand**  
Administrator  
Rural Business-Cooperative Service

SUBJECT: Rural Business Development Grant Program Application Window

**PURPOSE:**

This Unnumbered Letter provides guidance concerning the Rural Business Development Grant Program (RBDG) application solicitation for fiscal year 2018.

**BACKGROUND:**

Historically the RBDG funding cycle deadlines had been set by the states, as there was little doubt that funding would be available in the given fiscal year. However, due the uncertainty of funding this year, as well as the numerous short Continuing Resolutions, Rural Development has determined that it is in the best interest of the program and the Agency to create one standard application window.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

The RBDG application window will open on March 1, 2018, and close April 30, 2018. Applications must be received by State Offices no later than April 30, 2018, to be considered for any anticipated funding. National Office recognizes that some states may already have begun accepting applications and have an earlier closing date. Applications submitted before March 1, 2018, should be honored, and states must extend their RBDG application window if it closes before April 30, 2018.

Announcements for applications may be solicited through the State Rural Development Web site, e-newsletters, social media, blog, and dissemination by email.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Specialty Programs Division, (202) 720-1400.

**EXPIRATION DATE:**  
January 31, 2019

**FILING INSTRUCTIONS:**  
Community/Business Programs