Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

The program provides or improves Distance Learning and/or Telemedicine Services in Rural America by funding **equipment** that allows rural residents to access distance learning or telemedicine services from hub sites located in larger urban or suburban areas

- Overcoming the effects of remoteness and low population density.
Distance learning

**Distance Learning** means the *synchronous* delivery of *curriculum via telecommunications* and promotes the connection of students and teachers at remote sites.

1. Provide educational programs, instruction, or information originating in one area, whether rural or not, to students and teachers who are located in rural areas; or

2. Connect teachers and students, located in one rural area with teachers and students that are located in a different rural area.
Telemedicine is a synchronous 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 to residents of rural areas.

• Telemedicine shows benefit to rural residents either in reduced travel or improved access to service.
## Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program

### Available Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2016</th>
<th>FY 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$23.4 million available in FY 2016</td>
<td>Budget for FY 2017 is <strong>$23.6 million</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grants fund equipment needed to provide Distance Learning and Telemedicine services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Grants fund equipment needed to provide Distance Learning and Telemedicine services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15% Matching Requirement</td>
<td>15% Matching Requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Grant amount: $50,000</td>
<td>Minimum Grant amount: $50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Grant Amount: $500,000</td>
<td>Maximum Grant Amount: $500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only grants are available-no loans or combo loan/grants</td>
<td>Only grants are available-no loans or combo loan/grants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Program Updates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2016</th>
<th>FY 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>182 applications received for <strong>$55 million</strong></td>
<td>Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA) released in May 16, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98 applications approved: <strong>$27.9 million</strong></td>
<td>Applications due on or before July 17, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Promise Zones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 of 98 (32%) include a tribal coverage component</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communication Upgrades for Ambulances and Medical Transport Equipment

What is meant by "communication upgrades between ambulances, emergency transportation vehicles and medical facilities?"

- Communication upgrades should have a telemedicine component where the ambulance or medical transport attendant and patient could communicate with a medical professional at a hospital or medical clinic. The applicant must demonstrate that the primary purpose of equipment upgrades are for DLT purposes.
Applicant Eligibility

The following entity types are eligible to apply:

- Incorporated organization or partnership;
- Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (e);
- State or local unit of government;
- Consortium as defined in 1703.102; or
- Other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis.
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.

1. 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.

2. If the applicant is an informal consortium which by itself lacks the legal capacity to contract, the consortium must have a legally organized host organization that will apply on its behalf or each individual entity must contract with RUS on its own behalf. Each member of the informal consortium must provide signed copies of certifications.

See page 4 of the DLT Application Guide for more detail.
Categories of eligible grant purposes

There are three categories of eligible grant 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.

2. Acquiring instructional programming that is a capital asset (including the purchase or lease of instructional programming already on the market).

3. Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment. The costs for this category cannot exceed 10% of the grant amount requested or 10% of the eligible matching funds calculated separately.
Eligible Equipment

The following are examples of eligible equipment.

- Computer hardware and software
- Audio and video equipment
- Computer network components
- Telecommunications terminal equipment
- Data terminal equipment
- Interactive audio/video equipment
- Inside wiring

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.

All equipment must be new and non-depreciated.
Ineligible Equipment

Select Ineligible purposes:

- Acquiring, installing, or constructing telecommunications transmission facilities
- To pay for medical equipment not having telemedicine as its essential function; including Electronic Medical Records.
- Medical equipment not used primarily for telemedicine (50%+)
- Salaries or administrative expenses
- Application preparation costs
- Purchase of land, buildings, building construction, site development, or destruction or alteration of buildings.

See Page 6 of the DLT Application Guide for a more comprehensive list.
Additional Eligibility Criteria

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 sites included in the project.

See instructions beginning on Page 11 of the Application Guide for computing the Rurality Score.

Matching Contribution:

The grant applicant’s minimum matching contribution must equal 15 percent of the grant amount requested and be used for eligible grant purposes.

• There are special matching provisions for American Samoa, Guam, Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands for eligibility purposes (See Page 17 of the Guide; does not apply to Leveraging score)
Matching Funds

- Matching funds can either be cash or equipment used for the project or may be in-kind contributions from a third party.
- Matching funds must be for a purpose that would be otherwise eligible for grant funding (i.e., No salaries, administrative expenses, or other items prohibited from grant funding) and must be integral to the overall DLT project.
- The value of in-kind contributions must be supported. Vendor discounts are not an eligible in-kind contribution.
- Only new equipment may be used in a DLT project; donations or use of partially or fully depreciated equipment are not allowable as match.
Objective Criteria

**Rural Area (Rurality):** This criterion measures rural benefit. The score threshold for the application to be considered in the competition at all is 20 points. This category based on Census data (up to 45 Points).

**Economic Need (NSLP):** This criterion measures the general economic need of the area through the use of statistics from the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (up to 35 Points).

**Matching Funds (Leveraging):** The DLT program requires a minimum match of 15%. Higher matches receive more points. There are special matching provisions for American Samoa, Guam, Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands (up to 35 Points).
Scoring Criteria - Rural Area (Rurality)

### Rurality Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Designation (Hub; Hub/End-User/End-user)</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Census Population</th>
<th>Rurality Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. **Rurality Score** – Input the Rurality Score for each End-User or Hub/End-User site according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exceptionally Rural – Any area of the US <strong>NOT included within</strong> the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants.</td>
<td>5,000 or fewer</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural – 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.</td>
<td>5001 - 10,000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Rural – 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.</td>
<td>10,001 - 20,000</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Area – 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.</td>
<td>20,001 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Scoring Criteria - Economic Need (NSLP)

### Economic Need Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Designation (Hub: Hub/End-User/End-user)</th>
<th>School District</th>
<th>Total Students</th>
<th>% Eligible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. **Total Students** – Input the total number of students for the facility or total number of students for the School District according to the following decision matrix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of End-User</th>
<th>Is site Eligible for NSLP/CEP?</th>
<th>Use Student Population and NSLP/CEP % for Specific School</th>
<th>Use Student Population and NSLP/CEP % for School District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public School (K-12)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Non Profit School (K-12)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A College or Other Educ. Org.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others - Hospital, Public Library, Clinic, etc.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **Percent Eligible** – Input the percent of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program/Community Eligibility Provision in either the facility or the School District according to the decision matrix in Number 6 above.

8. **Economic Need Score** – Calculate the Average NSLP/CEP and input the Economic Need Score according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Table</th>
<th>Average NSLP/CEP Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSLP/CEP &lt; 25%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25% ≤ NSLP/CEP &lt; 50%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% ≤ NSLP/CEP &lt; 75%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% ≤ NSLP/CEP</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Scoring Criteria - Matching Funds (Leveraging)

### Leveraging Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Proposed Match ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(must provide Documentation Letter from each donor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1. Total Proposed Matching Contribution (must equal Line B + Line C in the Budget Worksheet) | |
| 2. Total DLT Grant Request (must equal Line D in the Budget Worksheet) | |
| Match Percent (Line 1 ÷ Line 2) | |

6. Calculate your score based on the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible Match ÷ Eligible Grant Request (%)</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15% &lt; Match % ≤ 30%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30% &lt; Match % ≤ 50%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% &lt; Match % ≤ 75%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% &lt; Match % ≤ 100%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match &gt; 100%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subjective Criteria

Additional NSLP: An applicant with NSLP eligibility below 50% may request additional points, and could receive additional points if they can document that the NSLP percentage is not an accurate indicator of the economic need of the area. (up to 10 Points)

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 45 Points)
Subjective Criteria (Con’t)

**Innovativeness**: This criterion assesses how the objectives of the proposed project are met in new and creative ways. (up to 15 Points)

**Cost Effectiveness**: This criterion evaluates the efficiency with which the proposed project and its technology deliver educational and/or medical benefits to beneficiaries. (up to 35 Points)

**Special Consideration**: RUS will offer special consideration to applications that contain at least one end-user site within a trust area or a tribal jurisdictional area, a “Strike Force” area or a “Promise Zone”. Such applications will be awarded 15 points.
Projects that contain at least one end-user site within a trust area or a tribal jurisdictional area, a “Strike Force” area or a “Promise Zone” will gain 15 extra points if...

... the applicant can document with a map showing the end-user site(s) located in the Special Consideration area, as well as the geographical coordinate(s), and physical street address(es) of the end-user site(s).
“Special Consideration”

For those applications that propose end-user sites in a trust area or a tribal jurisdictional area, the applicant will also need to submit evidence indicating that the area where the end-user site is located is a recognized trust area or a tribal jurisdictional area.

See Pages 23 and 24 of the Application Guide.
“Special Consideration”

• For more information on Strike Force Areas, go to: http://origin.www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=STRIKE_FORCE

• For more information on Promise Zones, go to: https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz

• See Pages 23 and 24 of the Application Guide
Completing the Grant Application

Starting on Page 9 of the Application Guide

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

- Site Worksheet (pg. 38)
- Rurality Worksheet (pg. 40)
- Economic Need Worksheet (pg. 42)
- Leveraging Worksheet (pg. 44)
- Additional NSLP Worksheet (pg. 46)
- Budget Worksheet (pg. 47)
Overview of Worksheets (Appendix A, Con’t)

Site Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Designation (Hub: Hub/End-User/End-user)</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>School District</th>
<th>Congressional District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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](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.
# Budget Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Item #</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th># of Units</th>
<th>Grant or Cash Match Funds</th>
<th>In-Kind Match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Overall DLT Project Budget (Sum of Total Grant/Cash Match and In-Kind Match Columns)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Less Proposed Cash Match (as documented in Tab _)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Less Proposed In-Kind Match (From total of In-Kind Match Column)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>DLT Grant Request (A-B-C)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Registration Requirements

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 [https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html](https://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.

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 at [https://www.sam.gov/](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 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.
2 CFR 200

Awards under the program are covered by this regulation.

Please review this CFR for procurement and other administrative requirements that apply to the DLT program.

Link:

http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl
Application Submission

1) **Electronically** via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

Or

2) **Postmarked, shipped, or hand-delivered** 2 paper copies of a completed application, one with original signatures, *accompanied by an electronic version* in the form of a CD-ROM or USB Flash Drive.
The paper applications and the CD-ROM/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
Additional Links

http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants