

## TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND LISTENING SESSION

### USDA Seeks Feedback on Proposed Rule to the Rural Business Development Grant Program

WASHINGTON, June 14, 2023 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will host a virtual Tribal consultation and listening session on July 12 for elected leaders of federally recognized Tribes or their proxies to provide feedback on a proposal to expand eligibility for Tribes under the [Rural Business Development Grant \(RBDG\) Program](#).

These grants create jobs, spur economic growth and support enterprise projects in rural and Tribal communities. The proposed USDA changes will expand eligibility definitions under the program to enable more Tribal government-owned entities to qualify for funding.

For instance, the Department plans to:

- Expand the “Small and Emerging Business” definition to include Tribal governments and Tribal-owned entities.
- Clarify the definition for “Conflict of Interest” to explain how the agency defines the relationship between Tribal nations and their Tribal-owned entities.

During this consultation, Tribal leaders will learn more about the proposed changes and can make recommendations relating to the proposed amendments. The Tribal consultation portion of the session will take place first and is reserved for dialogue between the USDA Consulting Officials and Tribal officials and/or their delegated proxies only. The consultation will be followed by a listening session where other stakeholders and representatives from Indian Country will have the opportunity to contribute recommendations and feedback.

#### Registration

Tribal Caucus:

- **Date:** July 12, 2023
- **Time:** 1:00-2:00pm EDT
- **Register at:** <https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsd-murj8rHP1-HgFlWEqfd0CSHVmsaKc>
- **Note:** Tribal caucus is an opportunity for Tribal leaders to discuss relevant consultation issues, typically facilitated by a recognized Tribal organization, without federal policymakers online.

Tribal Consultation and Listening Session:

- **Date:** July 12, 2023
- **Time:** 2:00-3:30pm EDT
- **Register at:** <https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsd-murj8rHP1-HgFlWEqfd0CSHVmsaKc>
- **Note:** Tribal Leaders registered for the caucus do not have to register again for the consultation.

USDA also encourages Tribal Leaders to submit written consultation remarks by email no later than Aug. 14, 2023, at [aian@usda.gov](mailto:aian@usda.gov).

To subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

###

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.*