

Solid Waste Management Grants Program

Fiscal Year 2025

Notice Of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Number: SWMFY25

Publication Date: October 1, 2024

Application Due Date: December 31, 2024

PROGRAM SOLICITATION INFORMATION

Funding Opportunity Title: Solid Waste Management Grants Program

Funding Opportunity Number: SWMFY25

Announcement Type: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Assistance Listing Number: 10.762

Dates: Completed electronic applications must be submitted through www.grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on December 31, 2024. SWM program will start accepting applications on October 1, 2024. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Executive Summary:

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS or the Agency), an agency of the Rural Development (RD) mission area of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is announcing the acceptance of applications under the Solid Waste Management Grants (SWMGs) Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, subject to the availability of funding. The SWMGs Program is designed to assist communities by awarding grant funding to qualified organizations that provide technical assistance and training to help reduce or eliminate the pollution of water resources and improve planning and management of solid waste sites in rural areas. This includes addressing contamination caused by emerging contaminants, such as Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), disaster resilience, and other areas of priority. Based on FY 24 funding levels, funding is anticipated to be approximately \$4,000,000 for FY25. All applicants are responsible for any expenses incurred in developing their applications.

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1.0 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1.1 RD KEY PRIORITIES

The Agency encourages applicants to consider projects that will advance the following key priorities (more details available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>):

- Assisting rural communities recover economically through more and better market opportunities and through improved infrastructure;
- Ensuring all rural residents have equitable access to Rural Development (RD) programs and benefits from RD funded projects; and
- Reducing climate pollution and increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The SWMGs Program is designed to assist communities by awarding grant funding to qualified organizations that provide technical assistance and training. The SWMGs Program funds can be used to help reduce or eliminate the pollution of water resources and improve planning and management of solid waste sites in rural areas. This includes addressing contamination caused by emerging contaminants, such as Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), disaster resilience, and other areas of priority.

1.3 STATUTORY AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY

The SWMGs Program is authorized under Section 310B(b) of the [Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act](#) (7 U.S.C. 1932(b)), as amended, the “ConAct”) and implemented by [7 CFR part 1775](#), Technical Assistance Grants. Other Federal statutes and regulations are listed at [7 CFR 1775.8](#), Other Federal statutes.

1.4 DEFINITIONS

The definitions applicable to this notice are published at [7 CFR 1775.2](#) Definitions.

1.5 APPLICATION OF AWARDS

Awards under the SWMGs Program will be made on a competitive basis using specific selection criteria contained in [7 CFR 1775.11](#). Priority and funding will be determined in consideration of the established criteria. The Agency advises all interested parties that the applicant bears the full burden in preparing and submitting an application in response to this notice regardless of whether or not funding is appropriated for the SWMGs Program in FY 2025.

2.0 FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Type of Award: Grants.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2025

Available Funds: Dependent upon FY 2025 appropriations. Funding is anticipated to be approximately \$4,000,000.

Award Amounts: No minimum or maximum award amount.

Anticipated Award Date: June 2025

Performance Period: October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2026

Renewal or Supplemental Awards: With the submission of a new application, existing projects are eligible to compete with applications for new Federal awards.

Type of Assistance Instrument: Grant Agreement

3.0 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants must meet the eligibility requirements of 7 CFR §1775.65, Eligibility.

(a) Entities eligible for grants must either be:

(1) Private nonprofit organizations with tax exempt status designated by the Internal Revenue Service. A nonprofit organization is defined as any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that:

(i) Is operated primarily for scientific, education, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest.

(ii) Is not organized primarily for profit.

(iii) Uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations.

(2) Public bodies.

(3) Federally acknowledged or State-recognized Native American Tribe or group.

(4) Academic institutions.

(b) Entities must be legally established and located within a state as defined in [§ 1775.2](#).

(c) Organizations must be incorporated by December 31 of the year the application period occurs to be eligible for funds.

(d) Private businesses, Federal agencies, and individuals are ineligible for these grants.

(e) Applicants must also have the proven ability; background; experience, as evidenced by the organization's satisfactory completion of project(s) similar to those proposed; legal authority; and actual capacity to provide technical assistance and/or training on a regional basis to associations as provided in [§ 1775.63](#). To meet the requirement of actual capacity, an applicant must either:

- (1) Have the necessary resources to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations in rural areas through its staff, or
- (2) Be assisted by an affiliate or member organization which has such background and experience and which agrees, in writing, that it will provide the assistance, or
- (3) Contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance.

3.2 COST SHARING OR MATCHING

There are no cost sharing or matching requirements associated with this grant.

3.3 OTHER

All submitted proposals must meet the intent outlined in [7 CFR 1775.63](#), Objectives. To be determined an eligible project, grant requests must be made for the purposes listed within [7 CFR 1775.66](#), Purpose.

4.0 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 ADDRESS TO REQUEST APPLICATION PACKAGE

The FY 2025 SWMGs Program Application Guide, copies of necessary forms and samples, and the SWMGs Program regulation are available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs/solid-waste-management-grants>. Application information is also available at <https://www.grants.gov/>.

4.2 CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Carefully review this notice, [7 CFR part 1775](#), and the FY 2025 SWMGs Program Application Guide, which collectively detail all required items for a complete application. The Agency will not solicit or consider new scoring or eligibility information that is submitted after the application deadline; however, the Agency reserves the right to contact applicants to seek clarification on materials contained in the submitted application during the eligibility review process. See the FY 2025 SWMGs Program Application Guide for a full discussion of each required item.

For requirements of completed grant applications, refer to [7 CFR 1775.10](#), Applications. The items at 7 CFR 1775.10(c)(3), (4), and (5) are no longer required to be separately submitted as part of the application as they are covered under System for Award Management and Unique Entity Identifier. The application and any materials sent with it become Federal records by law and cannot be returned to you.

4.3 SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT AND UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER

(a) At the time of application, each applicant must have an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting its application in accordance with 2 CFR part 25. To register in SAM, entities will be required to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Instructions for obtaining the UEI are available at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

(b) Each applicant must maintain an active SAM registration, with current, accurate and complete information, at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

(c) Each applicant must ensure they complete the Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations in SAM.

(d) Applicants must provide a valid UEI in its application, unless determined exempt under 2 CFR 25.110.

(e) The Agency will not make an award until the applicant has complied with all SAM requirements including providing the UEI. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Agency is ready to make an award, the Agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

4.4 SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

Applications and supporting materials must be submitted electronically and be received by www.grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m., ET, on December 31, 2024, to be eligible for FY 2025 funding. If the submission deadline falls on Saturday, Sunday, or a federal holiday, the application is due the next business day. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2025 grant funding.

4.5 INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," does not apply to this program.

4.6 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Applications must be for eligible purposes as defined above, and must comply with the limitations found within [7 CFR 1775.5](#), Limitations.

4.7 OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applications and supporting information will not be accepted via fax, electronic mail, or any other medium other than through www.grants.gov.

5.0 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

5.1 CRITERIA

1. *Criteria.* All applications that are complete and eligible will be scored and ranked competitively. The categories for scoring criteria used are the following:

Criteria No.	Criteria	Points
1	Project Area:	
	Multi-State	10 points
	Single State	5 points

2	Applicant experience in developing and implementing successful technical assistance and/or training programs similar to proposed project:	
	More than ten years	5 points
	Six to ten years	2 points
	Up to five years	1 point
3	Applicant resources – use of grant funds for grantee’s staff or affiliated staff versus contract personnel to carry out the proposed project:	
	At least 75% staff	10 points
	Between 50% and 74.99% staff	5 points
	Less than 50% staff * (See Regulatory Requirement)	Ineligible
4	Population of proposed area(s) to be served (based on 2020 Decennial Census data)	
	Less than 2,500	Up to 15 points
	Less than 5,500	Up to 10 points
	5,500 or more	0 points
5	Median Household income (MHI) of proposed area(s) to be served (based on American Community Survey data from 2017-2021 5-year period):	
	Less than 80% of the SNMHI (State Non-metropolitan Median Household Income)	Up to 10 points
	80% to 100% of the SNMHI	Up to 5 points
	More than 100% of the SNMHI	0 points
6	Project Duration:	

	Projects providing technical assistance and/or training that accomplish the objective within a 12 month or less time frame	5 points
	Over 12 months	0 points
7	Needs Assessment - The problem/issue(s) being addressed is clearly defined, supported by data, and addresses the need. Up to 5 points may be awarded for projects that support the remediation of emerging contaminants, such as PFAS, or disaster resiliency.	Up to 15 points
8	Goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the need as defined in the work plan, and are measurable. Up to 5 points may be awarded for projects that support the remediation of emerging contaminants, such as PFAS, or disaster resiliency.	Up to 15 points
9	Work plan - Clearly articulates a well thought out approach to accomplishing objectives; clearly identifies who will be served by project. Up to 10 points may be awarded for projects that support the remediation of emerging contaminants, such as PFAS, or disaster resiliency.	Up to 40 points
10	Actual assistance provided (Projects using multiple methods may receive a maximum total score of 30 points for this criterion):	
	Applicant is providing “hands-on” technical assistance and/or training primarily to solid waste management systems managers/operators.	Up to 10 points and/or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance primarily through the distribution of educational materials and other outreach methods.	Up to 10 points and/or

	Applicant is providing technical assistance through a demonstration and/or evaluation project.	Up to 5 points and/or
	Applicant is providing technical assistance to address the contamination of drinking water and surface water supplies by emerging contaminants, including per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).	Up to 5 points and/or
11	Evaluation methods are specific to the activity, clearly defined, measurable, with expected project outcomes.	Up to 20 points
12	In-Kind Support:	
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources of more than 25% of total budget.	10 points
	Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources 10-25% of total budget.	5 points
	Less than 10% of non-federal resources.	0 points
13	Sustainability: Applicant demonstrates ability to sustain project after grant period ends without federal award using a thorough financial analysis, to include cash on hand, projected revenues, and outside source contributions.	Up to 10 points
14	Administrator Discretion: RUS Administrator may provide additional points based on the following factors: geographic, economic, agency priority issues. **	Up to 15 points

* [7 CFR 1775.65](#) Eligibility - (e)(3) Applicants may contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance. RUS's definition of an affiliated organization is as follows:

In corporate law and taxes, an affiliate is a company that is related to another company, usually by being in the position of a member or a subordinate role (must be verified by organizational documentation). Two companies may be affiliated if one company has control over the other or if both

are controlled by a third company. One corporation can be affiliated with another corporation by shareholdings, by holding a minority interest, or one corporation might be a subsidiary of another.

****Administrator Discretion Points** – In order to be considered for Administrator Points the applicant's work plan must include a separate section titled: "Administrator Points". In this section the SWM Grant Program applicant will address one or more of the following factors:

- Assisting rural communities recover economically through more and better market opportunities and through improved infrastructure. (5 points) Applicant would receive priority points if the project is located in or serving a rural community whose economic well-being ranks in the most distressed tier (distress score of 80 or higher) of the Distressed Communities Index using the Distressed Communities Look-Up Map available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>.
- Ensuring all rural residents have equitable access to RD programs and benefits from RD funded projects. (5 points) Using the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) Look-Up Map (available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>), an applicant would receive priority points if the project is:
 - Is located in or serving a community with score 0.75 or above on the SVI;
 - Is a Federally recognized Tribe, including Tribal instrumentalities and entities that are wholly owned by Tribes; or
 - Is a project where at least 50 percent of the project beneficiaries are members of Federally Recognized Tribes and non-Tribal applicants include a Tribal Resolution of Consent from the Tribe or Tribes that the applicant is proposing to serve.
 - Is an application from or benefiting a Rural Partner's Network's (RPN) community network. Currently RPN Networks exist in Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Use the Community Look-Up map (available at www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points) to determine if your project qualifies.
- Reducing climate pollution and increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities. (5 points) Using the Disadvantaged Community and Energy Community Look-Up Map (available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>), applicants will receive priority in one of the three ways:
 - If the project is located in or serves a Disadvantaged Community as defined by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), or
 - If the project is located in or serves an Energy Community as defined by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
 - If applicants can demonstrate through a written narrative how the proposed climate-impact projects will improve the livelihoods of community residents and meet pollution mitigation or clean energy goals.

See the website, <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>, for options. The administrator discretion points will be awarded solely on the aforementioned factors, up to a cumulative total of 15 points.

5.2 REVIEW SELECTION PROCESSES

RUS will acknowledge the application's receipt via an email to the applicant. The following actions will be taken:

- (a) Incomplete or ineligible applications as of the deadline for submission will not be considered. If an application is determined to be incomplete or ineligible, the applicant will be notified in writing.

(b) Complete, eligible applications will be evaluated competitively by a review team, composed of at least two RUS employees selected from the Water Programs Division. They will make overall recommendations based on the program elements found in [7 CFR part 1775](#) and the review criteria presented in this notice. They will award points as described in the scoring criteria in [7 CFR 1775.11](#), Priority, and this notice. Each application will receive a score based on the averages of the reviewers' scores and discretionary points awarded by the RUS Administrator. RUS reserves the right to request additional information after an application is determined to be complete to minimize the risk of duplication of other federal efforts.

(c) Applications will be ranked, and grants awarded based upon the scoring results and funding availability. At RUS's discretion, projects scoring too low may not be awarded funding even if funding remains available.

(d) Regardless of the score an application receives, if RUS determines that the project is technically infeasible, RUS will notify the applicant, in writing and no further action will be taken.

6.0 FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

6.1 FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES

1. *Federal Award Notices.*

(a) *Application Outcomes.* There are four possible outcomes following the submission of an application under the SWM Grant Program. RUS reserves the right to make no grant awards if all applications are ineligible, incomplete or do not meet the established program objectives and priorities. RUS may determine that the application is: (1) Eligible and selected for funding, (2) Eligible but offered fewer funds than requested, (3) Eligible but not selected for funding, or (4) Ineligible for the grant.

(b) *Award Notices.* Applicants selected for funding will be sent an award letter, accompanied by a grant agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of the award, and other applicable documents. Pursuant to the Grant Agreement, grant funds may be released over the course of the grant period in reimbursement for the performance of eligible, approved activities which do not duplicate similar federal efforts or tasks. The Grant Agreement may also include reporting and pre-approval requirements consistent with [7 CFR part 1775](#) which if not met, may result in a delay in reimbursement, disallowance of expense, or a suspension of the grant.

(c) *Payments/Reimbursements* Grantees will be reimbursed as delineated at [7 CFR 1775.18](#), Fund disbursement, and the Grant Agreement.

(d) *Scope of Services.* Any change in the scope of the project, budget adjustments of more than 10 percent, or other modifications must get written prior approval in accordance with [7 CFR 1775.19](#), Grant cancellation or major changes, and the Grant Agreement.

(e) *Prevailing Wages.* All laborers, apprentices and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors on projects funded directly by or assisted in whole or in part by and through the Federal Government pursuant to the ConAct shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code. Further details on eligible applicants and projects may be found in the relevant regulations listed in Section C.

6.2 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

(a) *General*. There are no known unusual Administrative and National Policy Requirements associated with the SWM Grant Program. Additional requirements that apply to grantees selected can be found in the Grants and Agreements regulations of the Department of Agriculture codified in 2 CFR parts 180, 200, 400, 415, 417, 418, 421; 2 CFR parts 25 and 170.

(b) *Geospatial Data*. Awardee, and any and all contracts entered into by the awardee with respect to the award, shall ensure that geospatial data required to be collected and provided to the agency, conforms with the requirements of USDA Department Regulation DR-3465-001 and the Geospatial Metadata Standards set forth in DM 3465-001, which can be obtained online at usda.gov/directives/dr-3465-001 and usda.gov/directives/dm-3465-001.

6.3 REPORTING

Performance reporting, including applicable forms, narratives, and other documentation, are to be completed and submitted in accordance with the provisions of [7 CFR 1775.20](#), Reporting, and the Grant Agreement. Further, all grantees must submit an audit or financial information covering the defined period of performance as outlined in [7 CFR 1775.21](#), Audit or financial statements, and the Grant Agreement.

7.0 FEDERAL AWARD AGENCY CONTACTS

For general questions about this announcement, please contact Cynthia “Cyndy” Leonard at Water-RD@usda.gov or (540) 742-5284. The SWMGs Program website also provides up to date contact information at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/solid-waste-management-grants>.

8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the information collection requirements associated with the programs, as covered in this notice, have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0572-0112.

8.2 NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

All recipients under this Notice are subject to the requirements of [7 CFR part 1970](#), Environmental Policies and Procedures. However, awards for technical assistance and training under this Notice are classified as a Categorical Exclusion (CE) according to [7 CFR 1970.53\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#), CEs involving no or minimal disturbance without an environmental report, and usually do not require any additional documentation. RUS will review each grant application to determine its compliance with [7 CFR part 1970](#). The applicant may be asked to provide additional information or documentation to assist RUS with this determination.

8.3 FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

All applicants, in accordance with 2 CFR part 25, must be registered in SAM and have a UEI number as stated in Section D.3 of this notice. All recipients of Federal financial assistance are required to report information about first-tier sub-awards and executive total compensation in accordance with 2 CFR part 170.

8.4 CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

All grants made under this notice are subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as required by the USDA (7 CFR Part 15 Subpart A -- Nondiscrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs of the Department of Agriculture - Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, Title IX, Executive Order 13166 (Limited English Proficiency), Executive Order 11246, and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974.

8.5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

(a) Faith-based organizations may apply for this award on the same basis as any other organization, as set forth at, and subject to the protections and requirements of, this part and any applicable constitutional and statutory requirements, including 42 U.S.C. 2000bb et seq. USDA will not, in the selection of recipients, discriminate for or against an organization on the basis of the organization's religious character, motives, or affiliation, or lack thereof, or on the basis of conduct that would not be considered grounds to favor or disfavor a similarly situated secular organization.

(b) A faith-based organization that participates in this program will retain its independence from the Government and may continue to carry out its mission consistent with religious freedom and conscience protections in Federal law. Religious accommodations may also be sought under many of these religious freedom and conscience protection laws.

(c) A faith-based organization may not use direct Federal financial assistance from USDA to support or engage in any explicitly religious activities except when consistent with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and any other applicable requirements. An organization receiving Federal financial assistance also may not, in providing services funded by USDA, or in their outreach activities related to such services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice.

8.6 NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal civil rights laws and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, or staff office or the 711 Relay Service.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- (2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov