

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants

What does this program do?

This competitive program helps rural communities use advanced telecommunications technology to connect to each other - and the world - overcoming the effects of remoteness and low population density. We encourage you to consider projects that promote equity and economic opportunity in rural America, specifically those that advance these key priorities:

- **Supporting health care needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, and helping prepare for future pandemic events**
- **Ensuring racial equity**
- **Rebuilding our rural economy**
- **Addressing the climate crisis**

Congress has provided USDA Rural Development \$60 million in DLT funding this fiscal year. As permitted, we also will make available any unused appropriations from prior fiscal years, and can increase funding if additional appropriations become available.

Who can apply for this program?

Eligible organizations that provide education or health care services through telecommunications facilities can apply including:

- State and local government organizations
- Federally-recognized Tribes
- Nonprofit organizations
- Incorporated, for-profit businesses
- Groups of eligible entities working together

What is an eligible area?

The DLT program is targeted to rural areas with populations 20,000 or fewer.

How can funds be used?

Funds can be used to purchase or support:

- Audio, video, and interactive video equipment
- Broadband facilities used for distance learning or telemedicine (up to a certain percentage)
- Computer hardware, network components, and software
- Instructional programming
- Limited technical assistance and instruction on how to use distance learning and telemedicine equipment

What kinds of funding are available?

Funds are awarded through a nationally-competitive process. Currently, this is a grant-only program; there is no DLT loan or loan and grant combination.

What are some grant requirements?

- Awards range from \$50,000 to \$1 million
- A minimum 15 percent match is required and cannot be from another federal source

How do we get started?

- Application windows are announced periodically by the national office. Information is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xzWYU>.

Who can answer questions?

To learn more, email dltinfo@usda.gov, or contact the Telecommunications General Field Representative that services the state in which your proposed project is located. A state-based list is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xhrux>.

What governs this program?

Code of Federal Regulation 7 CFR Part 1734 (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xh2rE>)

Why does USDA Rural Development do this?

The DLT grant program helps rural residents tap into the enormous potential of the internet to improve education and health care; two of the most crucial keys to successful rural economic and community development.

NOTE: Because information changes, always consult official program instructions at the Code of Federal Regulation cited above, or contact your local USDA Rural Development office for help. A list is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xJHPE>. You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at <https://rd.usda.gov>. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.