



**Rural Development**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# **Technical Assistance and Training and Solid Waste Management Grant Programs**

## **Application Guide\* | Fiscal year 2022**

\*This application guide has been updated with new guidelines and procedures.  
Please read each section thoroughly.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and 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 and 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.

Those who require alternative means of communication for program information (examples include Braille, large print, audiotape, and American Sign Language, among others) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY,) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at "How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint" and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Postal letter:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

Fax: (202) 690-7442

Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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

## Table of Contents

<b>SECTION 1: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING GRANT AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GRANT PROGRAMS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.2 Authorization .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.3 Available funding for Fiscal Year 2022 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.4 Program Contacts.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.5 TAT and SWM Online Resources .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SECTION 2: REQUIREMENTS FOR A COMPLETE GRANT APPLICATION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.1 Preparing the Application.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.2 Required Forms .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.3 Project Proposal .....</b>	<b>7</b>
1. Project Summary.....	7
2. Needs Assessment .....	7
3. Project Goals and Objectives.....	7
4. Project Narrative .....	7
5. Work Plan .....	7
6. Budget and Budget Justification .....	8
7. Area(s) to be Served .....	8
8. Summary of Experience .....	8
9. Evaluation Method(s).....	8
10. Duration of Project or Service .....	8
11. Sustainability .....	8
12. Administrative Points.....	9
<b>2.4 Required Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1. Evidence of Legal Existence.....	9
2. List of Directors and Officers.....	9
3. IRS Tax exempt Status.....	9

4. Debarment and Suspension Rules .....	9
5. Drug-free Workplace Requirements.....	9
6. Audit .....	9
7. Financial statements .....	9
8. Other Organizational Documents.....	10
<b>2.5 Additional Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>SECTION 3: APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.1 Receipt Acknowledgment.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.2 Evaluating the Application .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.3 Scoring Criteria for Technical Assistance and Training Grants .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.4 Scoring Criteria for Solid Waste Management Grants .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.5 Application Selection .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.6 Possible RUS Actions on the Application.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.7 Appeals Process.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: RULES AND REGULATIONS .....</b>	<b>17</b>

**The information requested in these guidelines is being collected and used by the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to determine eligibility for grants and to meet reporting requirements. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0572-0112.**

# **Section 1: Technical Assistance and Training Grant and Solid Waste Management Grant Programs**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant Program is designed to assist communities with water or wastewater systems through technical assistance and training provided by grant recipients to rural water and wastewater organizations. Qualified private, nonprofit organizations receive TAT grant funds to identify and evaluate solutions to water and waste disposal problems in rural areas, assist applicants in preparing applications for water and waste grants made at state-level offices, and improve the operation and maintenance of existing water and waste disposal facilities in rural areas.

The Solid Waste Management (SWM) Grant Program is designed to assist communities through technical assistance and training provided by grant recipients to qualified organizations. SWM grant funds can be used to help reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources in rural areas, and improve planning and management of solid waste sites in rural areas.

In this guide, you will find information to help you:

- A listing of application items needed
- Explanation of scoring criteria for the TAT and SWM Grant Programs

## **1.2 Authorization**

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) authorizes the TAT and SWM programs. Section 306(a)(14)(A) authorizes the TAT Grant Program (see 7 U.S.C. 1926(a), as amended (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvaY>)). Section 310B authorizes the SWM Grant Program (see 7 U.S.C. 1932(b) (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvak>)).

The regulation implementing the TAT and SWM programs is found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Should any differences result in the interpretation of these guidelines and 7 CFR Part 1775 – Technical Assistance Grants, the regulation will take precedence over information contained in this guide. This guide is to be used in conjunction with 7 CFR Part 1775 (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMva8>)

## **1.3 Available funding for Fiscal Year 2022**

The funding amount available for fiscal year 2022 will be determined when the budget is approved by Congress.

## 1.4 Program Contacts

The Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) staff administers these programs. We encourage you to contact WEP staff with any questions you have early in the application process.

### Technical Assistance and Training Grant Manager

Telephone: 202-568-9046

Email: [Water-RD@usda.gov](mailto:Water-RD@usda.gov)

### Solid Waste Management Grant Manager

Telephone: 352-363-0550

Email: [Water-RD@usda.gov](mailto:Water-RD@usda.gov)

## 1.5 TAT and SWM Online Resources

TAT program information is available at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs/water-waste-disposal-technical-assistance-training>.

SWM program information is available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/solid-waste-management-grants>.

Additional application guidance can be found in the Fiscal Year 2022 Funding Opportunity Notice (FOA) available at <https://www.grants.gov>.

## Section 2: Requirements for a Complete Grant Application

### 2.1 Preparing the Application

To be considered for support, you must be an eligible entity and must submit a complete application by the deadline date. You should consult the cost principles and general administrative requirements for grants pertaining to their organizational type in order to prepare the budget and complete other parts of the application. You also must demonstrate compliance (or intent to comply), through certification or other means, with a number of public policy requirements.

### 2.2 Required Forms

Applicants must complete and submit the following forms to apply for a TAT or SWM grant. **Note:** Forms are available via [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) or [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). All forms are required regardless of the method of submittal.

- Standard Form 424, “Application for Federal Assistance – Non-construction”
- Standard Form 424A, “Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs”
- Standard Form LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activity”
- Form RD 400-1, “Equal Opportunity Agreement”

- Other required supporting forms and information as listed in 7 CFR Part 1775.10 (c) and (d) (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMfVz>).

## **2.3 Project Proposal**

The project proposal must outline the project in sufficient detail to provide the reader with a complete understanding of how the proposed project will work. Explain what your project will accomplish by utilizing the grant funds. Demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed project in meeting the objectives of this grant program. Proposals must be no more than 20 pages, single-sided, using a font size of 12 points (The Times New Roman font is preferred). The proposal must cover the following elements:

### **1. Project Summary**

Present a brief project overview. Explain the purpose of the project, how it relates to RUS's purposes, how you will carry out the project, what the project will produce, and who will direct it.

### **2. Needs Assessment**

Describe why the project or service is necessary. Demonstrate why eligible entities need grant funds. Quantify the number of prospective communities, or provide statistical or narrative evidence that a sufficient number of communities exist to justify the grant award. Describe the service area, including the names of communities to be served, population, and median household income (MHI). Address the specific needs of the proposed service area.

### **3. Project Goals and Objectives**

Clearly state your project goals. Your objectives must clearly describe these goals, and be concrete and specific enough to be quantitative or observable. They must also be feasible and relate to the purpose of the project.

### **4. Project Narrative**

The narrative must cover in more detail the items briefly described in the Project Summary. It must establish the basis for any claims that you have substantial expertise in providing effective Technical Assistance and Trainings. In describing what the project will achieve, tell the reader if it also will have broader influence. The narrative must address the following points:

### **5. Work Plan**

The work plan must describe the tasks and activities that will be accomplished with available resources during the grant period. It must show the work you plan to do to achieve the anticipated outcomes, goals, and objectives set out for the TAT or SWM Program. The plan must include:

- The benefits of the technical assistance or training

- A brief description of how the service will be provided, and whether currently employed personnel or contracted personnel will be used

## **6. Budget and Budget Justification**

The written justification for projected costs must explain how budget figures were determined for each category. It also must indicate which costs are to be covered by grant funds, and which costs will be met by your organization or other entities. The justification must account for all expenditures discussed in the narrative. It must reflect appropriate cost-sharing contributions. The budget justification also must explain the budget and accounting system proposed or already in place. The administrative costs for operating the budget must be expressed as a percentage of the overall budget. The budget justification must provide specific budget figures, rounding-off figures to the nearest dollar. Applicants must consult 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E “Cost Principles,” (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvaQ>) for information about appropriate costs for each budget category.

## **7. Area(s) to be Served**

Describe the areas to be served, including population, non-metropolitan median household income (MHI) information, and the name and state of association(s) or type of association(s) that will be served as defined by 7 CFR Part 1775.2 (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMfdz>). Also describe the method used to select the association(s) that will receive the service.

## **8. Summary of Experience**

Provide a concise summary of experience of the organization to provide the proposed service. More details, including experience of key staff members, resumes, and person(s) providing the technical assistance and training, can be included in an appendix.

## **9. Evaluation Method(s)**

Describe the evaluation method(s) to determine if objective(s) or the proposed activity is being accomplished.

## **10. Duration of Project or Service**

Briefly describe the duration of the project or service, and the estimated time from grant approval to beginning of project or service, not to exceed 12 months. The grant period begins October 1 of each year, and ends September 30 of the following year.

## **11. Sustainability**

Briefly describe the plans for increased self-sustainability for the project or service in future years, including how the project will be sustained in the future without federal award.

## **12. Administrative Points**

Only include if the applicant would like to be considered for administrative points on the factors listed in Section 3.3 and 3.4.

### **2.4 Required Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms**

In addition to completing the standard application forms, you must submit the following supplementary materials:

#### **1. Evidence of Legal Existence**

Demonstrate that your organization is legally recognized under state and federal law. Examples of satisfactory documentation include certificates from the Secretary of State, or copies of state statutes or laws establishing your organization. Letters from the IRS awarding tax-exempt status are **not** considered adequate evidence.

#### **2. List of Directors and Officers**

Submit a current certified list of directors and officers with their respective terms.

#### **3. IRS Tax exempt Status**

Submit evidence of tax-exempt status from the IRS.

#### **4. Debarment and Suspension Rules**

You must disclose debarment and suspension information required in accordance with 2 CFR Part 417 (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvaA>) "Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension," if it applies.

#### **5. Drug-free Workplace Requirements**

You must identify all of your organization's known workplaces by including the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings), or other sites where work under the award takes place. Workplace identification is required under the drug-free workplace requirements in accordance with 2 CFR Part 421 (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvas>) "Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)."

#### **6. Audit**

Submit a copy of the most recent audit of your organization. A link for website access to an audit is **not** acceptable.

#### **7. Financial statements**

Submit the following financial statements:

- Balance sheets
- Income and cash flow statements for the last three years.

- If the applicant organization was formed fewer than three years ago, financial statements must be submitted for the periods from inception to the present, including the pro-forma balance sheet at start-up and for at least three additional years.

## **8. Other Organizational Documents**

If contracting with an affiliated organization, provide the contract or legal documents that illustrate the affiliation between the contractor and your organization. For additional information, contact the WEP staff at 202-568-9046.

### **2.5 Additional Information Not Found on Standard Application Forms**

You can present additional information to support and describe your plan for achieving the grant objectives. This information, which can include such things as letters of support, resolutions, and policies, can be regarded as essential for understanding and evaluating your proposed project. Such supplements can be presented in appendices to your proposal.

## **Section 3: Application Review Process**

### **3.1 Receipt Acknowledgment**

RUS will acknowledge by email receipt of your application. It will be reviewed for completeness to determine if you included all required items.

### **3.2 Evaluating the Application**

A review team, composed of at least two members, will independently evaluate all applications and proposals. This team will make overall recommendations based on factors such as eligibility, clarity, detailed information, application completeness, and conformity to application requirements. They will score the applications based on criteria in the next section.

### **3.3 Scoring Criteria for Technical Assistance and Training Grants**

The application and supporting information will be used to determine the applicant's priority for available funds. All applications will be reviewed and scored for funding priority in accordance with this application guide. Points will be given only for factors that are well documented in the application package and, in the opinion of the RUS, meet the objective outlined under each factor, as guided by 7 CFR Part 1775.11 (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMf2w>) and outlined below.

#### **1. Project Area (10 points possible)**

National organization	(10 points)
Multistate organization	(5 points)
Single state or area organization	(2 points)

2. **Applicant experience at developing and implementing successful technical assistance or training programs similar to the proposed project** (5 points possible)
 

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 versus contract personnel to carry out the technical assistance or training** (10 points possible)
 

At least 75 percent staff	(10 points)
Between 50 percent and 74.99 percent staff	(5 points)
Fewer than 50 percent staff*	(ineligible)
  
4. **Population of the proposed area or areas to be served - based on the 2010 U.S. Census – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMwbH>** (15 points possible)
 

Fewer than 2,500	(up to 15 points)
Fewer than 5,500	(up to 10 points)
5,500 or more	(0 points)
  
5. **State Nonmetropolitan Median Household Income (SNMHI) of the proposed area(s) to be served based on data from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey, available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMwbf>** (up to 10 points possible)
 

Less than 80 percent of the SNMHI	(up to 10 points)
80 percent to 100 percent of the SNMHI	(up to 5 points)
More than 100 percent of the SNMHI	(0 points)
  
6. **Duration of projects providing technical assistance or training** (up to 5 points possible)
 

Projects that meet the objective within a 12-months or shorter timeframe	(5 points)
Projects that last more than 12 months	(0 points)
  
7. **Needs assessment: The problems or issues being addressed are clearly defined, supported by data, and address the need** (up to 15 points possible)
  
8. **Goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the need as defined in the work plan, and are measurable** (up to 15 points possible)
  
9. **Work plan: The work plan clearly articulates a well-thought-out approach to accomplishing objectives, and clearly identifies who will be served by the project** (up to 40 points possible)

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 or training primarily to water and waste systems managers and operators (10 points)
  - Applicant is providing technical assistance primarily through the distribution of educational materials and other outreach methods (10 points)
  - Applicant is providing technical assistance through a demonstration project (5 points)
  - Applicant is providing technical assistance to address the contamination of drinking water and surface water supplies by emerging contaminants, including per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (5 points)
11. **Evaluation methods are specific to the activity, clearly defined, measurable, and with expected project outcomes** (up to 20 points possible)
12. **In-kind support** (up to 10 points possible)
- Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources of more than 25 percent of the total project costs (10 points)
  - Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources of ten percent to 25 percent of the total project costs (5 points)
  - Fewer than ten percent of non-federal resources committed toward total project costs (0 points)
13. **Sustainability: The applicant demonstrates ability to sustain the project without federal awards using a thorough financial analysis, including such things as cash on hand, projected revenues, and outside source contributions** (up to 10 points possible)
14. **Administrator discretion: The Administrator for the Rural Utilities Service can provide additional points based on geographic, economic, or agency priority issues\*\*** (up to 15 points possible)

\* 7 CFR 1775.35(e)(3) Eligibility (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMw5X>) - Applicants can contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance. The Water and Environmental Program’s definition of an affiliated organization is as follows:

1. 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, and
2. One corporation can be affiliated with another corporation by shareholdings, by holding a minority interest, or one corporation might be a subsidiary of another.

**\*\*Administrative Points** – In order to be considered for administrative points, the applicant’s work plan must include a separate section titled “Administrative Points.” In this section, the applicant will address the following factors:

- An applicant receives priority points if the project is located in or serves one of the top 10 percent of counties (or county equivalents) in the U.S. based on county risk score, as determined by the COVID-19 Economic Risk Assessment Dashboard available at this link: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>. (5 points)
- Applicant receives priority points if the project is located in or serves a community with a score of 0.75 or above on the CDC Social Vulnerability Index, available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMwj3>. (5 points)
- Climate Impacts Quantitative: Applicants will receive priority points if the project is located in or serves coal, oil and gas, and power plant communities whose economic well-being ranks in the most distressed tier of the Distressed Communities Index available at this link: <https://eig.org/dci>. Applicants also will receive priority points by demonstrating how proposed climate-impact projects improve the livelihoods of community residents and meet pollution mitigation or clean energy goals. (5 points)

Administrative points will be awarded solely on the aforementioned factors, up to 15 points. For more information on priority points, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>.

### **3.4 Scoring Criteria for Solid Waste Management Grants**

The application and supporting information will be used to determine the applicant's priority for available funds. All applications will be reviewed and scored for funding priority in accordance with this application guide. Points will be given only for factors that are well documented in the application package and, in the opinion of the RUS, meet the objective outlined under each factor, as guided by 7 CFR Part 1775.11 (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMf2w>) and outlined below.

1. **Project Area** (10 points possible)
  - Multistate organization (10 points)
  - Single state organization (5 points)
2. **Applicant experience at developing and implementing successful technical assistance or training programs similar to the proposed project** (5 points possible)
  - 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 versus contract personnel to carry out the technical assistance or training**  
(10 points possible)
 

At least 75 percent staff	(10 points)
Between 50 percent and 74.99 percent staff	(5 points)
Fewer than 50 percent staff*	(ineligible)
  
4. **Population of the proposed area or areas to be served - based on the 2010 U.S. Census – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMwbH>**  
(15 points possible)
 

Fewer than 2,500	(up to 15 points)
Fewer than 5,500	(up to 10 points)
5,500 or more	(0 points)
  
5. **State Nonmetropolitan Median Household Income (SNMHI) of the proposed area(s) to be served based on data from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey, available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMwbf>** (up to 10 points possible)
 

Less than 80 percent of the SNMHI	(up to 10 points)
80 percent to 100 percent of the SNMHI	(up to 5 points)
More than 100 percent of the SNMHI	(0 points)
  
6. **Duration of projects providing technical assistance or training**  
(up to 5 points possible)
 

Projects that meet the objective within a 12-months or shorter timeframe	(5 points)
Projects that last more than 12 months	(0 points)
  
7. **Needs assessment: The problems or issues being addressed are clearly defined, supported by data, and address the need** (up to 15 points possible)
  
8. **Goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the need as defined in the work plan, and are measurable** (up to 15 points possible)
  
9. **Work plan: The work plan clearly articulates a well-thought-out approach to accomplishing objectives, and clearly identifies who will be served by the project** (up to 40 points possible)
  
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 or training primarily to water and waste systems managers and operators	(10 points)
Applicant is providing technical assistance primarily through the distribution of educational materials and other outreach methods	(10 points)
Applicant is providing technical assistance through a demonstration project	(5 points)

Applicant is providing technical assistance to address the contamination of drinking water and surface water supplies by emerging contaminants, including per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (5 points)

11. **Evaluation methods are specific to the activity, clearly defined, measurable, and with expected project outcomes** (up to 20 points possible)

12. **In-kind support** (up to 10 points possible)

Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources of more than 25 percent of the total project costs (10 points)

Demonstrated commitment of non-federal resources of ten percent to 25 percent of the total project costs (5 points)

Fewer than ten percent of non-federal resources committed toward total project costs (0 points)

13. **Sustainability: The applicant demonstrates ability to sustain the project without federal awards using a thorough financial analysis, including such things as cash on hand, projected revenues, and outside source contributions** (up to 10 points possible)

14. **Administrator discretion: The Administrator for the Rural Utilities Service can provide additional points based on geographic, economic, or agency priority issues\*\*** (up to 15 points possible)

\* 7 CFR 1775.35(e)(3) Eligibility (available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMw5X>) - Applicants can contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the grant to provide the proposed assistance. The Water and Environmental Program's definition of an affiliated organization is as follows:

1. 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, and

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

\*\*Administrative Points – In order to be considered for administrative points, the applicant's work plan must include a separate section titled "Administrative Points." In this section, the applicant will address the following factors:

- An applicant receives priority points if the project is located in or serves one of the top 10 percent of counties (or county equivalents) in the U.S. based on county risk score, as determined by the COVID-19 Economic Risk Assessment Dashboard available at this link: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>. (5 points)

- Applicant receives priority points if the project is located in or serves a community with a score of 0.75 or above on the CDC Social Vulnerability Index, available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMwj3>. (5 points)
- Climate Impacts Quantitative: Applicants will receive priority points if the project is located in or serves coal, oil and gas, and power plant communities whose economic well-being ranks in the most distressed tier of the Distressed Communities Index available at this link: <https://eig.org/dci>. Applicants also will receive priority points by demonstrating how proposed climate-impact projects improve the livelihoods of community residents and meet pollution mitigation or clean energy goals. (5 points)

Administrative points will be awarded solely on the aforementioned factors, up to 15 points. For more information on priority points, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>.

### 3.5 Application Selection

RUS will rank all qualifying applications by their final averaged score. Applications will be selected for funding, based on the highest scores and the availability of funding for TAT and SWM grants. Rural Development reserves the right to make no grant awards if all applications are incomplete or score below 65 points. All applicants will be notified of their selection status by email of the agency's funding decision.

**Note:** Applicants selected for funding must have an active registration with current information in the System for Award Management (SAM). The recipient must maintain current, accurate information in SAM until the final financial report required under the award is submitted, and all grant funds under the award are disbursed or de-obligated, whichever is later. This requires that you review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another award term. Recipients can register online at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). As the recipient, you cannot make a sub-award to an entity unless the entity has provided its DUNS number to you. Sub-recipients with sub-awards of \$25,000 or more must also maintain a current SAM registration. As the recipient, you must report all first-tier sub-awards of \$25,000 or more in non-Recovery Act funds to [www.fsr.gov](http://www.fsr.gov) no later than the end of the month following the month the obligation was made.

### 3.6 Possible RUS Actions on the Application

In making its decision about your application, RUS may determine that your application is:

- Eligible and selected for funding
- Eligible but offered fewer funds than requested

- Eligible but not selected for funding
- Ineligible for the grant

### 3.7 Appeals Process

In accordance with 7 CFR Part 1900 Subpart B – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMfvQ> - you generally have the right to appeal adverse decisions. However, some adverse decisions cannot be appealed. For example, if you are denied RUS funding due to a lack of funds available for the grant program, this decision cannot be appealed.

You can make a request to the National Appeals Division (NAD) to review the accuracy of our finding that the decision cannot be appealed. Your appeal must be submitted within the proper timeframe, in writing, and filed at the appropriate regional office, which can be found at <https://www.nad.usda.gov/content/file-appeal> or by calling 703-305-1151.

## Appendix A: Rules and Regulations

These rules and regulations have been mentioned throughout the text of the guide but are listed in one place for easy reference.

- 7 CFR Part 1775 Subpart C, “Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program” – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMfvE>
- 2 CFR Part 417, “Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension” – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvaA>
- 2 CFR Part 421, “Requirements for Drug-free Workplace (Financial Assistance)” – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvas>
- 7 CFR Part 1900 Subpart B, “Adverse Decisions and Administrative Appeals” – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMfvQ>
- 2 CFR Part 400, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards” – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMfvu>
- 2 CFR Part 200, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards” – available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xMvaQ>