

USDA Rural Development RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATION TOOLKIT FY2022

CFDA NUMBER: 10.351

CFDA TITLE: RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANT

**Application Due by close of business (4:30 pm)
February 28, 2022**

Applications must be submitted to Rural Development via Email (preferred method) or regular mail, Federal Express or UPS. Electronic signatures are acceptable.

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USDA Rural Development home page: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/>

USDA Rural Development Vermont home page: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/vt>

USDA Rural Development New Hampshire home page: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/nh>

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Background

The Congressional mandate established by Congress in the Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) requires USDA Rural Development to establish a new program called the Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) which combines the former Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) and Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG). The Agency has made no substantive changes to either program when combining the regulations into one RBDG program.

USDA Rural Development is charged with assisting in the startup, development, and expansion of small and emerging businesses and/or non-profits in rural communities. Rural Development supports this portion of the overall mission through two grant programs, the RBEG and RBOG programs.

The Agency combined 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G and 7 CFR part 4284, subpart G into the RBDG rule at 7 CFR part 4280, subpart E. Rural Development has also integrated applicable general provisions of 7 CFR part 4284, subpart A into the RBDG rule. Essentially, the Agency did not change any of the requirements of either program but blended the two regulations into one and eliminated duplicative portions so that there is only one set of requirements. The Agency also combined definitions so that the public has one definition for both programs as well as blended the scoring requirements of both former regulations. Finally, the Agency blended the application processes into one streamlined set of procedures under the RBDG funding, incorporating the statutory language of the 2014 Farm Bill (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)) specifying how the funding would be split.

Rural Development makes RBEGs to public bodies, non-profit corporations and federally recognized Indian Tribes so that they may support the development and/or expansion of small and emerging businesses in rural communities.

Enterprise Grant type funds may be used to: Acquire or develop land, buildings, plants, equipment; access streets and roads, parking areas, utility extensions, necessary water and supply and waste disposal facilities; provide technical assistance; establish revolving loan funds; and to create, expand, or operate rural distance learning programs that provide educational, or job training instruction related to potential employment or job advancement to adult students.

Opportunity Grant type funds are made to public bodies, non-profit corporations and federally recognized Indian Tribes to analyze rural business (small and emerging or larger business) opportunities, identify and/or provide training opportunities to rural entrepreneurs, conduct leadership development, establish training or technology centers, and conduct technical assistance or area-wide planning activities.

Grant funds may be used for projects identified as either business opportunity type grants or business enterprise type grants. The Agency will set aside 10 percent of its RBDG appropriation for business opportunity type grants. The Agency reserves the right to reallocate funds set aside for business opportunity type grants to business enterprise type grants if it becomes apparent to the Agency that there is insufficient demand for the funds set aside for the business opportunity type grants.

Strategic Economic and Community Development

Background and Discussion

The Agency administers a multitude of Federal programs for the benefit of rural America, ranging from housing and community facilities to infrastructure and business development. Its mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural communities by providing the leadership, infrastructure, capital, and technical support that enables rural communities to prosper. To achieve its mission, the Agency provides financial support (including direct loans, grants, and loan guarantees) and technical assistance. The purpose of this subpart is to support projects, by awarding reserved funds, that implement strategic community investment plans on a Multi-jurisdictional and Multi-sectoral basis through the submission and review of applications for the promoting regional economic and community development. Reservation of targeted funds are available for covered Rural Development programs including Rural Business Development Grants to encourage regional economic and community development. Section 6401 of the 2018 Farm Bill amended Section 379H, Strategic Economic and Community Development of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to state that **projects must be part of both a multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral Strategic Community Investment Plan in order to receive consideration for the set-aside.** *Multi-jurisdictional means two or*

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more jurisdictions. Sector means stakeholders from areas such as business, health, education, and/or workforce; or from organization types such as public, private, non-profit, and/or philanthropy.

Checklist

Before submitting your application, please ensure that you have completed the following:

SAMS Registration

All applicants for Federal grant funding must register in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database, or its successor database, known as the System for Award Management (SAM), at <https://www.sam.gov>, whether applying electronically or by paper, and at no cost. Registration may take 1-1.5 hours to complete and requires a DUNS #, tax ID and business name, statistical and financial information about the business (including number of employees and annual receipts for each of previous 3 years), and Electronic Funds Transfer information for payment of grant disbursements to grantee (Routing #, Account #, ACH contact). Registration activation will take 1-5 days with an established tax ID; OR 2-5 weeks if a new Employer Identification Number is used. A cage code number and expiration date will be provided when the registration is activated and **must** be included in your RBDG application information. For technical assistance, call the toll-free assistance line at 1-866-606-8220 and press "1." Enter the registration cage code and expiration date in field 5(a), "Federal Entity Identifier," on Form SF-424.

This registration must remain active, with current information, at all times during which an entity has an application under consideration by an Agency or has an active Federal Award. To remain registered in the database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and annually update its information in the database to ensure it is current, accurate and complete.

DUNS Number Registration

Step-by-Step Process to Register with iUpdate and Obtain a DUNS Number

The DUNS number is a unique nine-character identification number provided by the commercial company Dun & Bradstreet (D&B).

1. Click or copy the following link to your browser <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>
2. Click on "Begin D-U-N-S Search / Request Process" at the top of the left-hand toolbar
3. In the "Search" screen select "United States of America" (It will be at the top of the list) from the drop-down list and click "Continue"
4. In the "iUpdate – Webform Page" click on "Continue to iUpdate" arrow at the bottom of the screen
5. In iUpdate, locate the center box titled "Find DUNS or Request new DUNS" and click on the "Start Now" button
 - You must successfully complete 4 easy steps to access I Update. You can follow the status bar at the top of the page to manage your progress.
6. You must first make sure your company is not already on file. In the "Company Look-up" screen, please enter your Business Name, City and State and click the "Search" button.

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Company Look-up

Having trouble finding your company? Follow the below tips:

- Remove symbols from your search criteria. Example – if your company name is D & K GLOBAL ENTERPRISES remove the “&” sign from your search
 - Avoid any type of punctuation marks
 - Only enter the first word or two of the business name. Sometime less search criteria is better
 - Avoid abbreviations if not specifically part of the legal company name
 - If the company name carries the proper name of an individual, only enter Last Name of the individual in the “Business Name” section
 - Exclude corporate status designations in the “Business Name” section. (i.e. - Inc, Corp, LLC, Co. etc.)
 - If you locate your Business but the address is from a previous location, select that record as you can alter the address and other information once you are registered.
7. If you do not locate your company, click on the “Request a D-U-N-S Number” arrow at the bottom of the screen
8. You will now be in the New D-U-N-S Registration Process.

Two **IMPORTANT** NOTES:

- **PERSONAL** information is required at this step to validate your **PERSONAL** identity and eliminate fraudulent activity. **Do not** enter your **company address** as your registration will **fail**.
- Please ensure you see the ReCaptcha box at the bottom of the screen. If you do not have the ReCaptcha box, you will need to return to Step 8. When you get the box “Do you want to view only the webpage content that was delivered securely?” Click the “No” button.

Step 1 - Personal Information

This information is required at this step to validate your **PERSONAL** identity. **Do not enter** your **company address** as your registration will fail.

- Legal First Name and Legal Last Name:
 - Ensure you enter **your** Legal First Name and Legal Last Name. Examples – What is your name on your Driver’s License, Mortgage, Mailing Address, etc.
 - Avoid the use of nicknames, initials, and suffixes such as JR, SR, II etc.
- Enter **your** current physical **home** address.
- Home Telephone:
 - What telephone number do you most commonly use as your **Home Telephone Number?** (i.e., your cell phone is used as your Home telephone number)

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Step 2 – Company Info.

- Complete the company information sections. This will provide us the data necessary to build your D-U-N-S Number.

Step 3 – Review Details

- Review your company details. If correct proceed to Step 4.

Step 4 – Request Confirmation

- Click the “Submit” button to complete your request.

Note: Under normal circumstances the DUNS is issued within 1-2 business days when using the D&B online process.

It is recommended that you go directly to the D&B website to register for your DUNS number; however, you may call D&B at 1-800-333-0505 for assistance. If calling in:

- enter option “2” to register your business for Federal Assistance, then
- enter option “1” for Federal Registration.
- A service representative will answer and may suggest optional “products” to purchase – remember, obtaining a DUN’S number is absolutely **FREE** for all entities doing business with the Federal Government.

Register your Business with the System of Award Management (SAM)

You need to register your business with the federal government's SAM, the primary database of vendors doing business with the federal government. This registration is sometimes referred to as "self-certifying" your small business. Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR) require all prospective vendors to be registered in SAM prior to the award of a contract, basic agreement, basic ordering agreement, or blanket purchase agreement.

Using SAM, you will be able to register your business size and socio-economic status while completing the required solicitation clauses and certification. By completing your required solicitation clauses and certifications you certify that the information provided about your company and its business activities are correct.

SAM is also a marketing tool for businesses. SAM allows Government agencies and contractors to search for your company based on your ability, size, location, experience, ownership and more. SAM also informs searchers of firms certified by the SBA under the 8(a) Development and HUBZone Programs.

www.sam.gov

ALERT: SAM IS FREE TO REGISTER

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There is NO FEE to register, or maintain your registration, in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). If you receive an email from a company claiming to represent SAM.gov, be cautious. If you get an e-mail from a company offering to help you register in SAM.gov asking you to contact them and pay them money, be cautious.

These messages are not from the Federal Government. It is FREE TO REGISTER in SAM.gov for any entity. It is also free to get help with your registration.

To create an account and access SAM as a new user:

Step 1: Go to www.sam.gov.

Step 2: Click on “Create a User Account.”

Step 3: Choose Account Type:

Create an Individual User Account to perform tasks such as register/update your entity, create, and manage exclusion records or to view FOUO level data for entity records.

Create a System User Account if you need system-to-system communication or if performing data transfer from SAM to your government database system. Complete the requested information, and then click “Submit.”

Step 4: Click “DONE” on the confirmation page. You will receive an email confirming you have created a user account in SAM.

Step 5: Click the validation link in the email that contains the activation code within 48 hours to activate your user account. If the email link is not hyperlinked (i.e., underlined or appearing in a different color), please copy the validation link and paste it into the browser address bar. You can now register an entity. If you are a designated government official, you can search For Official Use Only (FOUO) information and enter exclusions into the system.

Step 6: If you are an organization, business, government agency or grantee (known in SAM as an “entity”), you must also register your entity in SAM. NOTE: Creating a user account does not create a registration in SAM, nor will it update/renew an existing registration in SAM.

To register in SAM as an entity:

Step 1: Login to SAM with your user ID and password.

Step 2: Gather all of the required information needed to complete your registration.

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Step 3: Click on "Register New Entity" from the left side navigation pane. Then click "Start Registration" near the bottom of the registration overview page.

Step 4: Complete and submit the online registration. It is estimated that it will take approximately 45 minutes to complete registration if you already have all the necessary information on hand, depending upon the size and complexity of your entity.

Step 5: You will receive a "congratulations message" from SAM.gov after registration has been successfully submitted and an email confirming that your registration is in process. Note that new registrations can take an average of 7-10 business days to process in SAM. SAM must send out some information for validation with outside parties before your registration can be activated; this includes TIN validation with the IRS and CAGE validation/assignment with DoD. This timeframe may be longer if the information you provide is flagged for manual validation by either party. If you notice your registration has had a 'Submitted' status for longer than 10 business days, and you have not otherwise been contacted to correct or update information, please contact the Federal Service Desk at 866-606-8220 or <https://www.fsd.gov>.

To update your entity's SAM registration, follow the below steps:

Step 1. Go to the SAM Homepage: www.sam.gov.

Step 2. Login first by entering your username and password in the top right-hand corner and then click the "Log In" button.

Step 3. Select "Register/Update Entity" on the left-side of your screen.

Step 4. You will see options for "Complete Registrations", "Incomplete Registrations" and "Inactive Registrations." Click on "Complete Registrations" if your registration is noted as Active.

Step 5. Click on "Incomplete or Inactive," if you have changes that you want to enter. Please select the entity record that you want to update from the Entity List box and click the "Update" button.

For SAM Customer Service, contact:

Federal Service Desk

URL: www.fsd.gov

Hours: 8am - 8pm (Eastern Time)

866-606-8220

If you press the HELP tab, you will find:

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- [Quick User Guides](#)
- [Full User Guide](#)
- [Helpful Hints](#)
- [Demonstration Videos](#)
- [Exclusions](#)
- [Information External](#)

Checklist

Required Forms:

- [SF424 Application for Federal Assistance](#)
- [SF424A Budget Information - Non Construction Programs](#)
- [SF424-B Assurances Non-Construction Program](#)
- [400-1 Equal Opportunity Agreement](#)
- [400-4 Assurance Agreement](#)
- [AD1047 Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters](#)
- [AD1049 Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements](#)
- [RD Inst. 1940-Q, EXH A-1 "Certification for Contracts, Grants, & Loans"](#)
- [AD3030 Representations Regarding Felony conviction and Tax Delinquency Status for Corporate Applicants](#)
- [RD400-8 Civil Rights Compliance Review](#)
- [Environmental Questionnaire](#) (Construction/Renovation contact Rural Development)
- [1980-88 Strategic Economic and Community Development \(Section 6025\) Priority](#) (Verify with USDA if appropriate for your project). **NOTE:** Strategic Economic Development funds come from designated set aside funds; therefor REAP Zone applicants are not eligible to apply for SECD funding

Environmental Requirements:

- Environmental Information Packet: Consult USDA for project appropriate material.

Strategic Economic and Community Development Requirements:

- 1980-88 Strategic Economic Community Development Form
- Additional Supporting Documentation

Non-Profits: Include in Appendix A:

- Articles of Incorporation (including any amendments)
- Bylaws (including any amendments)
- IRS letter granting non-profit standing
- Current (within 12 months) Certificate of Good Standing issued by the appropriate Secretary of State.
- Board Resolution authorizing entity to apply and administer the RBEG/RBOG including the name and title of the person authorized to sign grant documents.
- List of Board Members

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Public Bodies: Include in Appendix A:

- Documentation of organization (dated established if other than city, county, or state government).
- Resolution passed by the governing board authorizing entity to apply and administer the RBDG/RBOG, including the name and title of the person authorized to sign grant documents.
- List of Board Members

Section 1. Summary Information:

- Legal name of applicant
- Requested Grant Amount
- DUNS #
- SAM Registration Cage Code and Expiration Date
- Certification of Relationship to RD employee
- Certification of serving rural areas
- Certification of assisting small and emerging businesses (Enterprise Grant only)

Assigned Benchmark Number REAP ZONE (Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties) APPLICANTS ONLY:

To be eligible for REAP Zone funding applicants must obtain a “Benchmark” Number from Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA). Please contact Lorna Higgs, Project Manager at (802) 424-1421 or lhiggs@nvda.net
This Benchmark number MUST be included with your application

Section 2. Applicant Type:

- Non-profit corporation
- Public Body / Municipality
- Federally recognized Indian Tribe

Section 3. Project Eligibility:

Business **Enterprise** Project

OR

Business **Opportunity** Project

- Demonstration of Need
- Clear identification (list) of Small and Emerging Business(es) to be assisted
- Suggested Performance Criteria

- Demonstration of Need
- Economic Development Result
- Local and Area Strategic Plans
- Suggested Performance Criteria

Section 4. Scope of Work:

- Project Type / Description: RLF, Tech Assistance, Site, Feasibility Study
- Proposed Activities to be Accomplished
- Timeframe for Individual Activity Completion
- Timeframe (months) To Project Completion
- Timeframe from Grant Approval to Project Start

Section 5. Written Narrative:

- Project Need
- Project Benefits
- Demonstrate Project Meets Eligible Grant Purpose
- Area(s) to be Served (be specific)

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- Project Coordination with Area Economic Development Plans
- Goals to be Accomplished
- Identify Business(es) to be Assisted (if appropriate)
- Economic Development to be Accomplished
- Summary: How the Project will result in Created, Saved or Supported Jobs
- Quantify: Jobs Created, Saved and/or Supported for next 3 Year Period
- Description of Applicant Experience – Demonstrated Ability – Key Staff that Support Project
- Method and Rationale to Select Service Area and Proposed Benefitting Businesses
- Description of Project Methodology: Use of Organization Staff; Consultants; Contractors or Other
- Work Plan and Budget

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Organizational Documents §4280.427(b)
- Appendix B – Proposed Scope of Work
- Appendix C – Latest 3 Years Financial Information §4280.427(e)
- Appendix D – Supplemental Funds Verification §4280.427(g)
- Appendix E – Documentation of Experience

- Appendix F – Letters of Commitment from Businesses to be assisted (include jobs saved/created)
Letters of Support §4280.435(h)
- Appendix G – Additional Supporting Documentation
- Appendix H – Economic Distress Information
- Appendix I – Strategic Economic Community Development Documentation (See form 1980-88 and instruction [1980-K](#))

Rural Business Development Grant Instructions: [4280-E](#)

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Application Template

Section 1: Summary Information

Legal Name of Applicant:
(Verify from Articles/Bylaws)

Requested Grant Amount: \$

Applicant Type—Check One:

Nonprofit Entity

Public Body/Government Entity

Federally recognized Indian Tribe

Project Type – Check One:

Enterprise Grant

Opportunity Grant

DUNS #

SAM/CCR Registration Cage Code:

Expiration Date:

All applicants for Federal grant funding must register in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database, or its successor database, known as the System for Award Management (SAM), at <https://www.sam.gov>, whether applying electronically or by paper, and at no cost. Registration may take 1-1.5 hours to complete and requires a DUNS #, tax ID and business name, statistical and financial information about the business (including number of employees and annual receipts for each of previous 3 years), and Electronic Funds Transfer information for payment of grant disbursements to grantee (Routing #, Account #, ACH contact). Registration activation will take 1-5 days with an established tax ID; OR 2-5 weeks if a new Employer Identification Number is used. A cage code number and expiration date will be provided when the registration is activated and **must** be included in your RBDG application information. For technical assistance, call the toll-free assistance line at 1-866-606-8220 and press “1.” Enter the registration cage code and expiration date in field 5(a), “Federal Entity Identifier,” on Form SF-424.

This registration must remain active, with current information, at all times during which an entity has an application under consideration by an Agency or has an active Federal Award. To remain registered in the database after the initial registration, the applicant is required to review and annually update its information in the database to ensure it is current, accurate and complete.

REAP ZONE APPLICANTS ONLY: Assigned Benchmark Number

Project Summary [*Provide a concise summary of your proposed project*]

All Grant Applicants – Complete certifications 1 – 3.

1. Relationships to RD employees

To assure the high standards of honesty, integrity, and impartiality maintained by Rural Development employees, we need to identify any Rural Development assistance to be provided to employees, their relatives, or their business or close personal associates. This includes insured or guaranteed, loans or grants to individuals or organizations. If you know of any relationship or association you (the applicant) may have with a Rural Development employee, please provide this information, or advise if there is none. Your response will allow us to make special provisions for processing but will not affect your application status.

Immediate family, other relatives or close associates who are USDA Rural Development employees, if any, are listed here
If none, indicate here

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2. Rural Location

Applicant (grantee) organizations may be located in “rural” or “non-rural” communities. **Benefitting business (es)** must be located in a rural community with a population of 50,000 or less population and not located in a city or town located within the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town with a population over 50,000. You may verify rural eligibility of **benefitting business (es)** using the [Rural Eligibility Website](#). Note your agreement here that all business(es) to be served will be located in eligible rural area(s).

3. Citizenship Requirement

All business (es) assisted with grant funds must be at least 51 % owned by U.S. citizens or resident aliens (persons legally admitted for permanent residence). Note your agreement here that all proposed businesses assisted will be at least 51 % owned by U.S. citizens or resident aliens

Enterprise Grant Applicants Only

4. Small and Emerging Private Business Enterprise Requirement

Enterprise Grant Funds. All businesses assisted with RBDG enterprise grant funds must meet the following definition: “Any private business which will employ 50 or fewer new employees and has less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues.” Note your agreement here that all business (es) assisted will meet the RBDG program definition of small and emerging private business enterprise

5. Development or Financing of Small & Emerging Private Businesses - §4280.417(b)(2)

[Describe how grant funds will be used to finance and/or develop Small and Emerging Businesses in Rural Areas. Supporting documentation may be included in Appendix G]

6. Revolving Loan Fund Requests Only - §4280.453

RBDG Revolving Loan Funds are processed in accordance with Subpart 4274-D, Intermediary Relending Program and serviced in accordance with Subpart 1951-R. RBDG revolving loan funds are limited to financing no more than 75% of total project costs. Applicants must identify in the Project Budget the minimum 25% non-federal leverage funds.

Use of Funds: All Agency funds must be used for the purpose of making eligible loan(s). Loans cannot exceed 75% of total project costs in accordance with §4274.331(b)(2).

RLF Operating Budget: RLF applications must include an Annual Budget in accordance with §4274.332(b)(2). RBDG revolving loan fund initial administrative costs are the responsibility of the applicant. As loans are repaid, principal and interest are the basis of the continuation of the revolving loan fund. Subject to an approved Operating Budget, interest collected may be used to offset administrative costs of the Loan Fund.

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7. Equipment Purchase Requests Only

Provide a detailed list of equipment to be acquired along with supplemental funding (if applicable):

| Equipment Description | RBDG Funds | Supplemental Funds If Applicable | Notes / Supplement Source |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Total | \$ | \$ | |

Pass Thru Prohibition §4280.423(m)(4)

[To prevent the grant funds from being classified as “Pass Thru” please provide a description of how the grantee (applicant) will establish and charge benefitting businesses (ultimate recipients) for the “fair market use” of the equipment.]

█

Opportunity Grant Applicants Only

8. Economic Development Result - §4280.417(b)(1)

Opportunity Type Grants may be made only when there is reasonable prospect that the project will result in economic development of a rural area. *[Describe the economic development that will occur as a result of the proposed project. Include demonstration of project sustainability. Supporting Documentation can be inserted in Appendix G]*

█

9. Consistency with Local and Area Strategic Plans - §4280.417(d)

Grants may be made only when the proposed project is consistent with local and area-wide strategic plans for community and economic development, coordinated with other economic development activities in the project area and consistent with USDA Rural Development State Strategic Plan. *[Describe how the project coincides with local or regional strategic plans. Include Supporting Documentation Appendix G]*

█

All Grant Applicants:

Basis for Project Success or Failure §4280.417(c)


[A] Demonstrated Need: *[Describe the demonstrated need for the project]* █

[B] Project Evaluation: *[Describe the basis for determining the success or failure of the project]* █

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[C] Project Elements: *[Describe the major elements of the project]* 

[D] Project Impact: *[Describe the procedures that will be used to assess project impact at its conclusion]* 

Proposed Scope of Work - §4280.427(c)

3.1 Project Description – Opportunity Projects §4280.417(a)(1) or Enterprise Projects §4280.417(a)(2)

[Describe the project type: Technical Assistance, Revolving Loan Fund, Industrial Site or Business Opportunity]



3.2 Project Activities and Timeline

[Detail the key project activities to be accomplished and identify corresponding timeframes for each task.]



3.2 Project Duration

[Outline the months of project duration – explain (if applicable) any major breaks between activity points.]



3.2 Project Implementation

[Identify the expected timeframe between Award of Funds and Project Start – explain (if applicable) any delays.]



Written Narrative - §4280.427(d)

4.1 Project Need

[Explain the project need. Supporting documentation can be inserted in Appendix E]



4.2 Project Benefits

[Explain the benefits of the proposed project. Supporting documents can be inserted in Appendix G]



4.3 Eligible Grant Purpose

See: Opportunity Projects §4280.417(a)(1) or Enterprise Projects §4280.417(a)(2)

[Explain how the proposed project meets an eligible grant purpose. Supporting documents can be inserted in Appendix G]



4.4 Area to be Served

[Describe the area to be served, identifying each governmental unit (i.e., town, county, etc.) to be affected by the project.]



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4.5 Description of Project Coordination with Area Economic Development

[Describe the area to be served, identifying each governmental unit (i.e., town, county, etc.) to be affected by the project.]

4.6 Businesses Assisted – Economic Development

[Describe the business(es) to be assisted, if appropriate; and Economic Development to be accomplished. [Describe how the proposed project will create jobs or save existing jobs in the service area and provide an estimated number of jobs created and jobs saved. This is evidenced by letters of commitment from rural businesses that will be directly assisted]

| Number of Businesses | |
|--|---|
| Total Businesses to be assisted: | 0 |
| Type of Sub-Business assisted: ¹ | |
| Farmer/Rancher | 0 |
| Small Business | 0 |
| Individuals | 0 |
| Groups | 0 |
| Cooperatives | 0 |
| Type of Plan to be accomplished for the business (i.e., feasibility, business plans): | |

¹ “Total Businesses Assisted” must equal the sum of “Sub-Businesses Assisted”

4.7 Jobs Created/Saved

[Describe how the proposed project will create jobs or save existing jobs in the service area and provide an estimated number of jobs created and jobs saved. This is evidenced by letters from rural businesses that will be directly assisted in Appendix F.]

Jobs created are the jobs created by the “businesses assisted” and are directly related to, a result of, and attributed to the project funded by the RBDG project. Jobs created are generally located at the project site; however, jobs created may be located off site if they are employed by the business assisted and are directly related to the project. Examples may include increases in off-site sales staff due to a production expansion project. Enter the estimated number of jobs that will be created if the project is implemented. Part-time and seasonal jobs will be converted to full-time equivalents (FTE): count 2 part-time jobs as 1 full-time job; count 3 seasonal jobs as 1 full-time job. If part-time and/or seasonal jobs add up to a fraction, round up to the next whole number.

Jobs Summary: [Provide a summary of jobs on an FTE basis “prior to” and “projected at Year 3”]

| | Full Time | Part Time |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Current- Existing # of jobs | 0 | 0 |
| Projected jobs to be created as a result of this project | 0 | 0 |
| Projected jobs to be saved as a result of this project | 0 | 0 |

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Job Impact – 3 Years

[Explain how the project will result in newly created, increased or supported jobs and the number of projected new and supported jobs within 3 years.]

4.8 Rationale: Project Area

[Describe the method and rationale used to select the area(s) and business(es) that will benefit from assistance.]

4.9 Rationale: Project Execution

[Describe how the work will be performed including whether organization staff, consultants or contractors will be used.]

4.10 Coordination with Area Economic Development Activities

[Description of how the project will coordinate Economic Development activities with other Economic Development Activities within the project area. Supporting Documentation can be inserted in Appendix G]

4.11 Businesses to be Assisted and Economic Development to be Accomplished

[Describe Businesses to be assisted (if appropriate) and Economic Development to be accomplished. Supporting Documentation can be inserted in Appendix G]

4.12 Applicant Experience – Key Personnel

*[Describe applicant entity (organizations) demonstrated capability and experience in **providing the proposed assistance or similar economic development activities**. Include experience of key personnel providing project activities and managing project.]*

4.13 Applicant Expertise

[Insert key personnel, names, and experience of personnel on staff and, if applicable, under contract to be utilized for delivery of project tasks. Identify their connection to the project and include a resume of their experience. Attach resumes and other supporting documentation of experience in Appendix]

4.14 Work Plan Narrative

[Insert work plan narrative including how the grant purposes will be accomplished and milestones for accomplishing the proposed tasks. Additionally, if selected for funding, provide a statement indicating how soon after notification of grant obligation project will begin]

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Suggested Performance Criteria:

Suggest one or more relevant criterion to be used to evaluate the performance of the grant project during its operational phase post-award, as benchmarks to assess whether or not the primary goals and objectives proposed in the scope of work are accomplished during the project period. These criteria should relate to the overall project goal of financing and/or assisting small and emerging businesses or conducting business opportunity projects, with a resulting creation or saving of jobs.

[Insert Performance Evaluation Criteria]

a. Project Budget Summary

Summarize the total project budget by task. Project should reasonably be completed within 1 full year after it has begun. Insert additional rows as needed.

| Activity # | Task Name and Description | Start Date | End Date | RBDG Funds | Supplemental Funds | Total Project Costs |
|------------|---------------------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | TOTAL PROJECT | | | \$ | \$ | \$ |

b. Sources of Funding

[Identify sources and amounts of matching funds. Provide written verifiable commitment of funds from other sources. An authorized representative of the organization contributing funds from another source must provide evidence that the funds are **available** and will be used for the proposed project. Verification of matching funds documentation should be in Appendix D.]

Matching Funds: Verification of match must be provided in Appendix D (**highly recommend use of attached Match Forms**)

| Contributor | Amount |
|---------------------|--------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total Contributions | |

c. Task Budget Format

Provide a budget table for **each task** that will be completed for **each main activity** listed above. Add additional task tables as needed.

| Task #1 Budget Categories | RBDG Funds | Supplemental Funds | Total Project Costs |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Personnel | | | |
| Fringe Benefits | | | |
| Travel | | | |
| Supplies | | | |
| Contractual | | | |
| | | | |
| Total | \$ | \$ | \$ |

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Provide explanation/clarification of the basis for the above budget figures:

[Insert task budget explanation]

| Task #2 Budget Categories | RBDG Funds | Supplemental Funds | Total Project Costs |
|------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Personnel | | | |
| Fringe Benefits | | | |
| Travel | | | |
| Supplies | | | |
| Contractual | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Total | \$ | \$ | \$ |

Provide explanation/clarification of the basis for the above budget figures:

[Insert task budget explanation]

Scoring Information

Scoring Criteria: Leveraging - Applicant has evidence of commitment of funds from nonfederal sources for proposed project. If Rural Development portion of project funding is:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Less than 20 percent | 30 points |
| 2. 20 but less than 50 percent | 20 points |
| 3. 50 but less than 75 percent | 10 points |
| 4. 75 percent or more | 0 points |

Rural Development funds divided by total project costs \$ ____ X 100 = ____% which is Rural Developments portion of project funding

Scoring Criteria: Size of Grant Request

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Less than \$100,000 | 25 points |
| 2. \$100,000 to \$200,000 | 15 points |
| 3. More than \$200,000 but not more than \$500,000 | 10 points |

Scoring Criteria: Indirect cost - Applicant is **not** requesting grant funds to cover their administrative or indirect costs. 5 points

Applicants are limited to 10% of Grant for indirect costs unless an authorized Indirect Cost Rate has been approved and all documentation provided

Scoring Criteria: Population - Proposed project(s) will be located in a community of:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Under 5,000 | 15 points |
| 2. Between 5,000 and less than 15,000 | 10 points |
| 3. Between 15,000 and 25,000 | 5 points |

Scoring Criteria: Unemployment - Proposed project(s) will be located in areas where the unemployment rate:

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- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Exceeds the State rate by 25% or more | 20 points |
| 2. Exceeds the State rate by less than 25% | 10 points |
| 3. Is equal to or less than the State rate | 0 points |

Scoring Criteria: Medium Household income - Proposed project(s) will be located in areas where the median household income (MHI) for the State is:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Less than poverty line | 25 points |
| 2. More than poverty line but less than 65% | 15 points |
| 3. Between 65% and 85% | 10 points |
| 4. Equal to or greater than 85% | 0 points |

Scoring Criteria: Economic Distress - Points will be awarded for each of the following criteria met by the community or communities to benefit from the grant (cannot exceed 40 points total):

- | | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| 1. Trauma (Natural disaster occurred not more than 3 years prior to filing application) | 15 points | FEMA Designation _____ |
| 2. Economic distress (Military Base/Employer 20% or more loss in total jobs) | 15 points | |
| 3. Long-Term Poverty (Demonstrated by being a former EZ/EC, REAP, CC or a persistent poverty county) - indicate which _____ | 10 points | |
| 4. Long-term population decline (Demonstrated by latest 3 decennial Census) - Show amounts _ | 10 points | |
| | | Subtotal _____ (Cannot Exceed 40 Points) |

Scoring Criteria: Applicant has written evidence that small business development will be supported by startup or expansion as a result of the grant. 5 points for each letter for separate businesses up to 25 points. CANNED LETTERS WILL NOT BE COUNTED

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 4. One job for less than \$5,000 | 25 points |
| 5. One job for 5,000 but less than \$10,000 | 20 points |
| 6. One job for \$10,000 but less than \$15,000 | 15 points |
| 7. One job for \$15,000 but less than \$20,000 | 10 points |
| 8. One job for \$20,000 but less than \$25,000 | 5 points |

Amount of Grant divided by number of jobs = \$_____/jobs

Scoring Criteria: Applicant has evidence of successful experience in type of activity.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. 10 or more years | 30 points |
| 2. At least 5 but less than 10 years | 20 points |
| 3. At least 3 but less than 5 years | 10 points |
| 4. At least 1 but less than 3 years | 5 points |

Number of years' experience

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Additional Scoring Criteria

***Scoring Criteria:** Discretionary points - Either the State Director or Administrator may assign up to 50 discretionary points to an application. Assignment of discretionary points must include a written justification. Permissible justifications are geographic distribution of funds, special Secretary of Agriculture initiatives such as Priority Communities, or a state's strategic goals. Discretionary points may only be assigned to initial grants.*

However, in the case where two projects have the same score, the State Director may add one point to the project that best fits the State's strategic plan regardless of whether the project is an initial or subsequent grant.

Agency Priorities: The majority of business sectors can be assisted by the program. The Agency encourages applications that will advance the following key priorities of Rural Development:

1. Assisting rural communities recover economically from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly disadvantaged communities.
2. Ensuring all rural residents have equitable access to USDA-Rural Development programs and benefits from Rural Development funded projects; and
3. Reducing climate pollution and increasing resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities.

For further information, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/priority-points>

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Appendices

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Appendix A: Organizational Documents

Please attach evidence of Legal Authority and Good-standing (Examples: By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation or Organization, Letter or Certificate of Good Standing from your Secretary of State or equivalent agency).

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Appendix B: Scope of Work

Please attach latest Three (3) years financial statements including, balance sheets, income statements and current audited report if available.

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Appendix C: Latest 3 Years Financial Information

Please attach latest Three (3) years financial statements including, balance sheets, income statements and current audited report if available.

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Appendix D: Supplemental Funds Verification

Documentation verifying eligible supplemental funds are available and have been committed to the project must be included in your application to qualify for consideration under applicable scoring criterion.

Examples of acceptable documentation include: a signed letter from the source of funds stating the amount of funds, when the funds will be provided, and what the funds can be used for, an executed grant agreement, and a signed resolution from your governing board authorizing the use of a specified amount of funds for the project (if funds will be contributed by the applicant organization).

APPENDIX D.1 Verification of Matching Funds: Applicant Cash

The use of this form is optional, but **highly** recommended. If you choose not to use this form, you must provide **ALL** of the information requested below in a similar format and include it in this Appendix. If the applicant is contributing cash-on-hand to pay for goods and/or services during the grant period that are eligible expenses for the project, the expenditure is considered a cash match. The applicant must sign this statement to verify (a) the amount of cash match, (b) the source of the cash match, and (c) use of the cash match. A copy of a bank statement with an ending date within one month of the application submission deadline and showing an ending balance equal to or greater than the amount of Cash Matching Funds proposed is also required at time of application (note: please redact any account numbers appearing on your statement).

Legal Name of Applicant: _____

Title of Applicant’s RBDG Project: _____

Total Project Cost: \$ _____ RBDG Grant Request: \$ _____ Total Applicant Cash Match: \$ _____

Identify all source(s), amounts, and uses of **Applicant Cash Matching Funds** that your organization currently has available and committed to eligible RBDG project expenditures during the grant period proposed in the SF424 form and Section 5.4(2) a. Include a **copy of an account statement from each source** dated within 30 days of the application submission showing an ending balance equal to or greater than the amount of Cash Matching Funds proposed.

| Applicant Source of Cash Funds | Name of Holding Institution | Cash Match Amount | Use of Funds for Project Budget Activities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Checking Account | | \$ | |
| Savings Account | | \$ | |
| Certificate of Deposit | | \$ | |
| Money Market | | \$ | |
| Mutual Funds | | \$ | |
| Other | | \$ | |
| Total Cash | | \$ | |

Has your organization formally approved the Cash Match Amounts and Purpose at time of application?

Yes No _____ Date of Approval _____ N/A

Print Name of Applicant/Authorized Representative: _____

Title of Applicant/Authorized Representative: _____

Signature of Applicant or Authorized Representative: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX D.2 Verification of for Matching Funds: Applicant Approved Loan or Line of Credit

Page 1 of 1

Use of this form is optional, but **highly** recommended. If you choose not to use this form, you must provide **ALL** of the information requested below in a similar format and include it in this Appendix. Ask your lending institution to provide all of the information below, at time of application, to verify your approved Loan or Line of Credit that will be used as matching funds for your RBDG project during the grant period proposed in the SF424 form and Section 5.4(2) a.

For purposes of facilitating the Work Plan and Budget Activities identified in the associated Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) application, and as an Authorized Representative of the lending institution identified below, I verify and confirm the following information:

Legal Name and Address of Lender Providing Loan or Line of Credit for RBDG Matching Funds:

Legal Name and Address of Intended Recipient/Borrower of Loan or Line of Credit for RBDG Matching Funds (must be the same legal name as identified on the RBDG application):

Total Amount of Loan or Line of Credit to be Used for Eligible RBDG Project Purposes: \$ _____

Brief Description of Borrower's Use of Loan/LOC Funds: *[Insert description]*

Will the Loan or Line of Credit be provided to the Borrower during the proposed grant period, or on a specific date within the proposed grant period? Yes No

Date(s) of Transfer or Availability of the Funds to Borrower (month/day/year): _____

Date of Loan/LOC Approval _____ N/A

**Print Name of Authorized Representative
For Lending Institution:** _____

Title of Authorized Representative: _____

**Signature of
Authorized Representative:** _____ **Date:** _____

February 2016

APPENDIX D.3 Verification of Matching Funds: Applicant IN-KIND Contribution

Page 1 of 2

Use of this form is optional, but **highly** recommended. If you choose not to use this form, you must provide **ALL** of the information requested below in a similar format and include it in this Appendix. You must describe (a) the nature of the goods or services to be donated and how they will be used, (b) the value of the goods or services with an explanation of the basis of the valuation, and (c) when the goods or services will be donated, including specific dates (month/day/year) corresponding to the grant period proposed in the SF424 form and Section 5.4(2)a , or to dates within the grant period, when the contributions will be made available to the project.

Legal Name of Applicant: _____

Title of Applicant's RBDG Project: _____

Total Project Cost: \$ _____ RBDG Grant Request: \$ _____ Applicant In-Kind Value: \$ _____

Print Name of Applicant/Authorized Representative: _____

Title of Applicant/Authorized Representative: _____

**Signature of Applicant or
Authorized Representative:** _____ **Date:** _____

Only eligible goods or services provided during the grant period for which no expenditure is made can be considered in-kind. Verification for in-kind contributions that are over-valued will not be accepted.

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION

A. Applicant Owner or Family Member Time as In-Kind Match

If you propose to use applicant owner or family members' participation in eligible project activities as in-kind match, please provide the information below for each participant. The total value of in-kind services provided by the applicant and family members must not exceed 25 percent of total project costs. (Note: the participation of the employees of Tribes and tribal entities must be clearly documented as owner participation if it is to be used as in-kind match):

- 1) Name of Owner or Family Member who will perform the services
- 2) Relationship to the Owner of Applicant Organization
- 3) Description of services to be provided
- 4) When the services will be provided (month/day/year)
- 5) Value of services to be provided
- 6) Basis for valuation (attach supporting documentation)
- 7) Total value of all services provided by the applicant owner and all family members (Total must not exceed 25 percent of total project costs).

[Insert documentation]

Continued next page

B. OTHER Applicant In-Kind Contributions

If you propose to use other eligible goods or services contributed to the project, as Applicant In-kind Match, provide the information below for each good or service.

- 1) Name of provider of good or service
- 2) Relationship to the Owner of Applicant Organization
- 3) Description of the good or service to be provided
- 4) How the good or service will be used in the project
- 5) When the good or service will be provided
- 6) Value of the good or service
- 7) Basis for the valuation (include documentation)
- 8) Total value for all goods and services

[Insert documentation]

APPENDIX D.4 Verification of Matching Funds: Third-Party Cash

Page 1 of 1

*The use of this form is optional, but **highly** recommended. If you choose not to use this form, you must provide **ALL** of the information requested below in a similar format and include it in this Appendix. The Third-Party contributor must complete and sign where indicated to verify the (a) amount of cash to be donated, and (b) when it will be donated, indicating specific dates (month/day/year) corresponding to the grant period proposed in the SF424 form and Section 5.4(2)a, or to dates within the grant period, when matching funds will be made available to the project.*

For purposes of facilitating the Work Plan and Budget Activities identified in the associated FY2017 Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) application, and as an Authorized Representative of the third-party organization identified below, I verify and confirm the following information:

Legal Name and Address of Third-Party providing CASH Matching Funds:

Legal Name of Intended Recipient of Third-Party CASH Matching Funds:

Total Amount of Third-Party CASH Matching Funds to be Donated for Eligible RBDG Project Purposes:

\$ _____

Will the Third-Party CASH Matching Funds be provided to the Intended Recipient during the proposed grant period?

Yes No

Dates of Transfer/Availability _____ (month/day/year)

Name of Financial Institution currently holding Third-party cash matching funds to be transferred to Intended Recipient:

Does your organization understand that cash matching contributions from third parties cannot be used to provide services which directly benefit the third-party contributor, and that contributors of cash matching funds may not limit how or where the funds are used? Yes No

Has your organization approved the Third-Party CASH transfer amount and RBDG general purpose?

Yes No Date of Approval _____ N/A

Print Name of Authorized Representative

For Third-Party Organization: _____

Title of Authorized Representative: _____

Signature of Authorized Representative: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX D.5 Verification of Matching Contribution: Third-Party In-Kind

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Use of this form is optional, but **highly** recommended. If you choose not to use this form, you must provide **ALL** of the information requested below in a similar format and include it in this Appendix. The Third-Party contributor may provide a signed letter with the following information or may complete and sign this form where indicated to describe (a) the nature of the goods and/or services to be donated, (b) the value of the goods and/or services to be donated with a description of the basis for the valuation, and (c) when the goods and/or services will be donated during the grant period proposed in the SF424 form and Section 5.4(2)a, including specific dates (month/day/year) within the grant period when the matching contributions will be made available.

For purposes of facilitating the Work Plan and Budget Activities identified in the associated FY2017 Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) application, and as an Authorized Representative of the third-party organization identified below, I verify and confirm the following information:

Legal Name and Address of Third-Party Providing In-Kind Contribution:

Legal Name of Intended Recipient of Third-Party In-Kind Contribution:

Value of All Third-Party In-Kind Donation for Eligible Project Purposes: \$ _____

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION

For **Third-Party In-Kind Contributions**, provide the following information for each good or service provided. Organizations contributing the services of affiliated volunteers must provide verification for *each individual volunteer*. Verification for in-kind contributions that are over-valued will not be accepted.

- 1) Description of the good or service
- 2) How the good or service will be used in the project
- 3) When the good or service will be provided
- 4) Value of the good or service
- 5) Basis for the valuation (include documentation)
- 6) Total value for all goods and services

[Insert documentation]

Continue to next page

Will the third-party in-kind contribution be provided to the recipient during the proposed grant period?

Yes No

Anticipated Date(s) of contribution:

Has your organization formally approved the In-Kind Match contribution value and purpose at Time of Application? Yes No Date of Approval _____ N/A

Does your organization understand that in-kind contributions from third parties cannot be used to directly benefit the third-party contributor? Yes No

Print Name of Authorized Representative for Third-Party In-Kind Contributor:

Title of Authorized Representative:

Signature of Authorized Representative: _____ **Date:**

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Appendix E: Documentation of Experience

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Appendix F: Letters of Commitment from Businesses to be assisted (include jobs saved/created)

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Appendix G: Additional Supporting Documentation

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Appendix H: Economic Distress Information

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Appendix I: Strategic Economic Community Development Information