USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Rural Development

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program

Application Guide

Fiscal Year 2020



Rural Utilities Service

Telecommunications Program

February 2020

DISTANCE LEARNING & TELEMEDICINE PROGRAM
GRANT APPLICATION GUIDE
FISCAL YEAR 2020

RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Introduction and General Information

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

General Information:

Distance learning means a telecommunications link to an end-user through the use of eligible equipment to provide educational programs, instruction, or information originating in one area, whether rural or not, to students and teachers who are located in rural areas.

Telemedicine means a telecommunications link to an end-user through the use of eligible equipment which electronically links medical professionals at separate sites in order to exchange health care information in audio, video, graphic, or other format for the purpose of providing improved health care services primarily to residents of rural areas.

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program is specifically designed to assist rural communities in acquiring distance learning and telemedical technologies so that local teachers, and medical service providers who serve rural residents can link to other teachers, medical professionals, and other needed expertise located at distances too far to access otherwise. Since 1994, the DLT Grant Program has helped to establish hundreds of distance learning and telemedicine systems improving quality of life for thousands of residents in rural communities all across the United States.

!! BEFORE GETTING STARTED!!

All applicants must read:

7 CFR 1734, Subpart A and B

Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) published on the DLT Program Website and in Grants.gov on **February 10, 2020**.

DLT Program Website: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants;

The regulation **MUST** be used in conjunction with this Application Guide. Should any differences result in the interpretation of this Application Guide and the regulation, the regulation takes precedence over information contained in this Application Guide.

For additional information concerning this grant program, please contact:

Loan Origination and Approval Division, Telecommunications Program
(202) 720-0800 or Email: dltinfo@usda.gov
Additional information and forms are available on our website at:
https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants

When and Where to Submit Application:
GRANT applications must be postmarked by:

April 10, 2020

Applications must be submitted in **EITHER** of the following two ways:

1. Electronically via www.grants.gov

If submitting via grants.gov, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all required documentation is included with the submittal.

OR

2. Postmarked, shipped, or hand-delivered 2 paper copies of a completed application, one with original signatures, accompanied by a full electronic copy in the form of **a USB Flash Drive**. The paper applications and the **USB Flash Drive** containing a digital copy of the full application must be submitted to:

Deputy Assistant Administrator

Loan Origination and Approval Division

Rural Utilities Service

STOP 1597, Room 2844

1400 Independence Ave., SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-1597

Due to the possible disruptions in mail delivery service, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications via express mail or hand delivery to our office. **Please note that this is the last year RUS intends to accept paper applications for this program.**

Applicants that submit their applications after the deadline noted above will be notified that their applications will not be considered for funding and their applications will be returned.

Prior to official submission of applications, applicants may request technical assistance or other application guidance from the Agency, if such requests are made at least 15 days prior to the due date listed in FOA. Technical assistance is not meant to be an analysis or assessment of the quality of the materials submitted, a substitute for agency review of completed applications, nor a determination of eligibility, if such determination requires in-depth analysis. The Agency will not solicit or consider scoring or eligibility information that is submitted after the application deadline. The Agency reserves the right to contact applications to seek clarification information on materials contained in the submitted application.

Applications Delivered by Mail:

Paper applications must show proof of mailing or shipping consisting of one of the following:

1. A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark;
2. A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS by midnight Eastern Time; or
3. A dated shipping label from a commercial carrier showing that the commercial carrier received the package on or before the application submittal deadline. Self-generated shipping labels where the actual pickup by the carrier occurs after the application submittal deadline are not acceptable.

If an application is sent through the USPS, neither of the following will be accepted as proof of mailing:

1. A private metered postmark; or
2. A mail receipt that is not dated by the USPS.

Applicants should note that the USPS does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office.

Applications Delivered by Hand:

Applications delivered by hand will be accepted daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time), except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays. Individuals delivering applications must provide proper identification to enter the building.

Applications Submitted Electronically:

Electronic applications will only be accepted when submitted through the Grants.gov website. Applications will not be accepted via facsimile machine transmission or electronic mail.

https://www.grants.gov

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) strongly encourages applicants to obtain all necessary sign-ups, credentials and authorizations well in advance of the deadline including the required SAM.gov registration and financial assistance certifications and representations. Grants.gov requires some one-time credentialing and online authentication procedures. These procedures may take several business days to complete. Several requirements on Grants.gov and SAM.gov call for an annual update; applicants should also ensure that their credentials and authorizations are up to date.

The Grants.gov website, like all web facilities, has finite capacity. If several federal grant programs have the same application deadline date, periods of site overloading can be experienced. Please plan accordingly.

Please follow the instructions on Grants.gov. If applicants experience a technical problem retrieving or submitting an electronic application, they should contact the Grants.gov customer support resources (click the "Customer Support" tab on any page of Grants.gov to get started). RUS staffers do not control the technical aspects of Grants.gov and won't be able to help if an applicant experiences a problem. However, RUS is available to answer questions about the Program and the contents of an application.

Grants.gov applications must be submitted by **midnight Eastern Time** on the closing date.

Additional Registration Requirements for all Applicants:

Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System Registration – As required by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), all applicants for grants must supply a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying. The Standard Form 424 (SF–424) contains a blank to enter the DUNS number. The DUNS number can be obtained free of charge by calling Dun & Bradstreet.

Please see: https://www.grants.gov/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html

for more information on how to obtain a DUNS number or how to verify an organization's number.

The DUNS number must belong to the Applicant, not an affiliate, subsidiary or parent company.

System for Award Management Registration – Applicants, whether applying electronically or by paper, also must register in the System for Award Management (SAM) PRIOR to submitting an application. Applicants may register for the SAM free of charge at https://www.sam.gov/SAM/ . Applicants should keep in mind that it can take up to ten (10) business days to register with SAM. Applicants should plan accordingly and begin the process well in advance of the application deadline.

The SAM registration must remain active with current information at all times while RUS is considering an application or while a Federal Grant Award or loan is active. To maintain the registration in the SAM database the applicant must review and update the information free of charge in the SAM database annually from date of initial registration or from the date of the last update. The applicant must ensure that the information in the database is current, accurate, and complete.

On February 2, 2019, SAM implemented a new process that allows financial assistance registrants to submit common federal government-wide certifications and representations. Entities registering on SAM.gov can now review and submit financial assistance certifications and representations online. The DLT Program requires applicants to make these certifications through SAM rather than submitting them as part of a grant application. If an applicant has a current SAM registration but did not make the financial assistance certifications and representations at the time of establishment or renewal of its registration, it should log into SAM and add those certifications and representations before submitting a grant application.

Please check the applicant's SAM registration for accuracy prior to submitting an application.

Changes for 2020 DLT:

Application Guide changes:

1. The maximum grant amount has been increased to $1 million dollars.
2. The Special Consideration category for Opioid Treatment has been broadened to encompass other Substance Use Disorder Treatment as well. (see page 21)
3. Opportunity Zones have been added to the Special Consideration category. (see page 20)
4. Many certifications have been replaced by the financial assistance certifications and representations in SAM.gov. (see page 8)

Eligibility Requirements

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible for a grant, an organization must:

1. Be legally organized as an incorporated organization, an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304; a state or local unit of government, a consortium; or other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis. Each applicant must provide evidence of its legal capacity to contract with the Rural Utilities Service to obtain the grant and comply with all applicable requirements.

   Consortium: A consortium is a combination or group of entities formed to undertake the purposes for which the distance learning and telemedicine financial assistance is being requested.

   - If the applicant is an existing established consortium with the legal ability to contract with the Federal Government, that organization can apply in the name of the formal consortium.
   - If the applicant is an informal consortium which by itself lacks the legal capacity to contract with the Federal Government, each individual entity must contract with RUS in its own behalf.
   - An informal consortium may have a legally organized host organization which will apply on behalf of the consortium and be designated as the project owner with all awardee responsibilities.

2. Either operate a rural community facility or deliver distance learning or telemedicine services to entities that operate a rural community facility or to residents of rural areas at rates calculated to ensure that the benefit of the financial assistance is passed through to such entities or to residents of rural areas.

Per 2 CFR 200.319 (a), contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for procurements of equipment or services under the grant.

Equipment vendors, manufacturers, system integrators, and other businesses whose purpose in the proposal is to sell equipment or technological services to support applicants cannot themselves be applicants or affiliates of the applicant. If the grant writer for the application is paid by a vendor, manufacturer, system integrator, or other business, the vendor, manufacturer, system integrator or other business becomes an affiliate of the applicant and cannot participate in the project.

Note: Electric or telecommunications borrowers financed through the Rural Utilities Service are eligible for grants.

Eligible Grant Purposes:

There are three categories of eligible purposes:

1. **Acquiring, by lease or purchase, eligible equipment**. If leased, the cost of the lease during the three-year life of the grant is eligible.

   The following are examples of eligible equipment. This list is not exhaustive. Neither does it convey blanket eligibility. A computer is not automatically eligible. It must be used for an eligible purpose. Remember also that the purpose of the DLT Grant program is to deliver education or medical care between remote sites via telecommunications, not simply to furnish educational or medical technology.

   - Computer hardware and software
   - Site licenses and maintenance contracts
   - Extended warranties (up to 3 years)
   - Audio and video equipment
   - Computer network components
   - Telecommunications terminal equipment
   - Data terminal equipment
   - Interactive audio/video equipment
   - Inside wiring
   - Broadband facilities, if owned by the applicant

In general, equipment not electronically interconnected to the grant and match funded equipment is not eligible. The application must demonstrate that the predominant purpose (50% or more of use) of every line-item in the grant and match budget meets the DLT Grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine,
NOTE: All equipment purchased for this Project must be new or non-depreciated.

2. **Acquiring instructional programming** that is a capital asset (including the purchase or lease of instructional programming already on the market). Renewals of instructional programming are not eligible nor is classroom equipment (such as laboratory equipment). Also, expenses (such as those for tuition, fees for coursework on a per course basis, or fees for cultural events or virtual field trips) are not capital assets and therefore, are not eligible.

3. **Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment**, including any related software; developing instructional programming that is a capital asset and providing engineering or environmental studies relating to the establishment or

expansion of the phase of the project to be financed with the grant. The costs for this category cannot exceed 10% of the grant amount requested.

Ineligible Grant Purposes:

The following purposes are considered ineligible grant purposes (see 7 CFR 1734.23):

- To pay for medical or educational equipment not having telemedicine or distance learning as its essential function; including telephone systems.
- To pay for Electronic Medical Records (EMS) systems.
- To pay salaries, wages, or employee benefits to medical or educational personnel;
- To pay for the salaries or administrative expenses of the applicant or the project;
- To purchase equipment that will be owned by the local exchange carrier or another telecommunications service provider unless that service provider is the applicant.
- To duplicate facilities providing distance learning or telemedicine services in place or to reimburse the applicant or others for costs incurred prior to RUS' receipt of the completed application;
- To pay costs of preparing the application package for financial assistance under this program;
- For projects whose sole objective is to provide links between teachers and students or between medical professionals who are located at the same facility or campus environment;
- For site development and the destruction or alteration of buildings;
- For the purchase of land, buildings, or building construction;
- For projects located in areas covered by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.);
- For any purpose that the Administrator has not specifically approved;
- Except for leases provided for in §1734.21, to pay **the cost of recurring or operating expenses for the project including but not limited to broadband connection fees;**
- For any other purposes not specifically contained in §1734.21.

Additionally, except as otherwise provided in §1734.12, grants shall not be used to finance a project, in part, when the success of the project is dependent upon the receipt of additional financial assistance under this subpart **or is dependent upon the receipt of other financial assistance that is not assured.**

Additional Eligibility Criteria:

1. **Minimum Rurality Score:** In order to be eligible to receive a grant, an application must receive a minimum of **20 points** as an average score for all hub/end-user and end-user

sites included in the project. See instructions under Section C-1 for calculating the Rurality Score.

2. **Matching Contribution:** The grant applicant's matching contribution must at least total 15 percent of the grant amount requested and be used for eligible grant purposes. See instructions under Section D for more information on the Matching Contribution.

Other Considerations:

Rural Areas: The intent of the DLT program is to benefit rural areas (populations of 20,000 or less). While some projects could include end-users in more urbanized areas, the Agency will evaluate projects based on their benefit to rural areas.

Online Education Services: Because this program is intended to fund end-user equipment at specifically identified sites, applications which propose to provide only web-based services which are universally available are considered ineligible. This type of project does not have a defined service area and the beneficiaries can be located anywhere, including urban areas.

Grant Limits

The minimum Grant amount which can be requested is **$50,000**. The maximum Grant amount which can be requested is **$1,000,000.**

Grant Review Process

1. **Grant Receipt:** Completed applications must be postmarked, hand-delivered, or submitted through https://www.grants.gov/ by the specified submission date to be considered for funding.

2. **Incomplete Applications:** RUS may request additional information that would not change the application or scoring, in order to complete the appropriate documents covering financial assistance.

3. **Scoring:** All complete applications will be scored in accordance with the criteria set forth in this guide, on the program website and the Grants.gov website.

4. **Ineligible Applications:** Applicants with applications that are deemed ineligible will be notified in writing regarding application deficiencies.

5. **Appeals:** RUS Telecommunications and Electric Borrowers may appeal the decision to reject their application. Any appeal must be made, in writing, within 10 days after the applicant is notified of the determination to deny the application.

6. **Selection Process:** Applications will be selected for approval based on scores assigned, availability of funds, and the provisions of § 1734.27.

Regardless of the number of points an application receives, the Administrator may take any of the following actions:

a) Limit the number of applications selected for projects located in any one State during a fiscal year.
b) Limit the number of selected applications for a particular type of project.
c) Select an application receiving fewer points than another application, if there are insufficient funds during a particular funding period to select the higher scoring application. If the Administrator makes this kind of selection and it affects an application, the applicant will be given an opportunity to reduce the amount of the grant request to the amount of funds available.

7. **Legal Documents:** All grantees will be required to execute a standard DLT Grant Agreement. A standard form of this agreement can be found on our website under the Forms and Resources tab at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants

Completing the Grant Application

This section addresses all the information that must be submitted in order for an application to be deemed complete and considered for funding. Please make sure that all the necessary information is included in the appropriate section. All the required forms and certifications are included in Appendix A to this Guide or are available through SAM.gov.

A. Standard Form 424 w/**Site Worksheet**
B. An Executive Summary of the Project
C. Scoring Criteria Documentation
D. Matching Requirements
E. Scope of Work
F. Financial Information and Sustainability
G. Statement of Experience
H. Telecommunications System Plan
I. Compliance with other Federal Statutes
J. Evidence of Legal Authority and Existence
K. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation
L. Consultation with USDA State Director and State Strategic Plan Conformity
M. Supplemental Information

A. Standard Form 424 w/Site Worksheet

There is one attachment to the SF-424, the **Site Worksheet** (required). Please use the following definitions on the Site Worksheet when distinguishing a site as a Hub, Hub/End-User or End-User Site. Applicant will keep these designations the same for Rurality and Economic Need Worksheets.

> ***Hub Sites:*** A hub site is a facility that is part of a network or telecommunications system that provides educational or medical services to hub/end-user or end-user sites. A pure hub receives no end-user benefits. The site is usually a connection management point or is exclusively an educational or medical source of distance learning or telemedicine.
>
> ***End-User Site:*** An end-user site is a facility that is part of a network or telecommunications system that is utilized by end-users. For a site to be included as an end-user site for scoring purposes, the applicant must demonstrate equipment purchased will be installed or placed at the site and site will only receive benefits or services from other networked sites.
>
> A ***Hub/End-User*** site performs both functions: a hub which also accommodates end-users.

Some of the information requested on the Site Worksheets such as population and congressional districts can be obtained at the US Census web site. Further guidance on navigating the US Census website is available in Appendix B.

The paper application must be signed by an authorized representative of the organization who has the authority to commit the organization's resources to carry out the project for the term of the grant. If the application is submitted through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application must be an authorized representative.

B. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary gives reviewers their first overall view of the project area, the problems that residents face, and how the proposed project will address those problems. This is the applicant's opportunity to discuss the core aspects of the project. It should contain a concise description of the project including:

1. A description of why the project is needed.
2. An explanation of how the applicant will address the need cited, why the applicant requires the financial assistance, the types of education or medical services to be offered by the projects, and the benefits to rural residents.
3. A description of the applicant, documenting eligibility.
4. An explanation of the total project cost including a breakdown of the grant required and the source of matching contribution and other financial assistance for the remainder of the project.
5. A statement specifying whether the project is either a **distance learning or telemedicine facility** as defined in § 1734.3. If the project provides both distance learning and telemedicine services, the applicant must identify the predominant use of the system.
6. A statement specifying whether the project is requesting special consideration points for STEM education, Opioid or other Substance Use Disorder treatment, or Opportunity Zone. If no special consideration is being requested, applicant should state "No special consideration requested.".
7. A general overview of the telecommunications system to be developed, including the types of equipment, technologies, and facilities used.
8. A description of the participating hubs and end-user sites and the **number of rural residents that will be served by the project at each end-user site**.
9. Discussion of relationship of applicant with participating hubs and end-user sites and if application is being filed as an **informal consortium.** If application is for an informal consortium with all entities requesting ownership of their sites' equipment, a single **fiscal agent** must be identified as the applicant and all entities must provide certifications and documentation under Sections I and J, respectively.
10. A certification by the applicant that facilities constructed with grants do not duplicate adequate established telemedicine or distance learning services.
11. A listing of the location of each end-user site (city, town, village, borough, or rural areas) plus the State.

At the end of the Executive Summary, please provide a section titled **"Publicly Releasable Project Description"** which contains the following information:

1. Title of the Project
2. Description of the proposed hub/end-user and end-user site(s)
3. A brief description of project
4. Total estimated population affected by proposed project

Any information included in this section may be released to interested parties inquiring about an application, so please provide an adequate description of the project, but do not include any information that the applicant would not want released to the public. Please clearly denote the section which is publicly releasable, including where the releasable description begins AND ends.

C. Scoring Criteria Documentation

The DLT Grant Program is a competitive program. Applications are scored in **objective** and **subjective** categories. The table below lists each DLT category, and the maximum points available.

Objective Criteria

C-1	Rural Area **(Rurality)**: (up to 40 points)	This category based on Census population data.
C-2	Economic Need **(SAIPE):** (up to 30 points)	This category is based on the U.S. Census Bureau's SAIPE program used to project annual estimates of income and poverty statistics for school districts, counties, and states.
C-3	Special Consideration: (10 points)	RUS will offer special consideration to applications that have the primary purpose of STEM education, Opioid or other Substance Use Disorder treatment, or Opportunity Zone.

Subjective Criteria

C-4	Need for Services and Project Benefits **(**Needs & Benefits): (up to 30 points)	This criterion compares the specific need for the technology in the proposed service territory, and how the proposed project will address those needs and benefit the residents of the area affected.

C-1 Rurality – Up to 40 Points

The Rurality score is based on the population size of each community where an end-user site is located. For non-fixed site projects and projects which contain non-fixed components, the Rurality score will be based on the population of the Hub site. Applicants can use Census population data either from the Census Website (Appendix B) or from the Rand McNally Atlas (Atlas) that cites the 2010 Census as its source for population statistics. Population figures used in the 2020 DLT Grant competition must use the 2010 Census as the source, whether it is from the Atlas, or from the Census Website.

Please use the Rurality Worksheet to calculate the Rurality Score. The Worksheet is available as an Excel worksheet at:
http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx.

Include the population statistics and rurality calculations for all sites, including those designated as (pure) hubs. Use the following definitions for assistance in designating the type of site:

> ***Hub Sites:*** A hub site is a facility that is part of a network or telecommunications system that provides educational or medical services to end-user sites. A pure hub receives no end-user benefits. The site is usually a connection management point or is exclusively an educational or medical source of distance learning or telemedicine.
>
> ***End-User Site:*** An end-user site is a facility that is part of a network or telecommunications system that is utilized by end-users. In order for a site to be included as an end-user site for scoring purposes, the applicant must demonstrate equipment purchased will be installed or placed at the site.
>
> A ***Hub/End-User*** site performs both functions: a hub which also accommodates end-users.

The following classifications define the various population levels determining the Rurality score.

> EXCEPTIONALLY RURAL AREA – **5,000 and under: *40 Points***. Any area of the USA not included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants.
>
> RURAL AREA – **5,001-10,000: *30 Points***. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 inhabitants.
>
> MID-RURAL AREA – **10,001-20,000: *20 Points***. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.
>
> URBAN AREA - **Over 20,000: *0 Points***. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.

Use the ***Rurality Work*sheet** to enter: 1) the name given to the site; 2) the town, city, or *Census Designated Place within a state* where the site is located; 3) the population (2010 Census) of the town, city or Census Designated Place; and 4) the *Rurality* score (as derived from the Population-to-Score table).

Although pure hubs are not included in the calculation, except in the case of Non-fixed end-user applications and hybrid applications, the Agency will need this data to recalculate the score if there appears to be end-user beneficiaries at the site. Place the sites in the same order and use the same numbering as on the *Site Worksheet* (and which will be used on the *SAIPE Worksheet)*.

If any end-user sites are not within the boundaries of a town or a *place* that can be identified by the 2010 Census or found in the listing of cities, towns, and places in the Atlas, there is a possibility that the community is so rural that it is not associated with any Census-recognized community. If this is the case, the location would be considered by the RUS DLT Program as 'Census Rural' and be reported as an "Exceptionally Rural Area".

Adding up Individual Scores for an Overall *Rurality* Score

After all the sites and corresponding populations have been entered on the *Rurality Worksheet*, calculate the estimated score by taking the average of the scores for sites designated as end-users or hub/end-users. Do not include pure hubs in the calculation. ***Exception*:** Non-fixed end-user applications only use hub sites in the calculation and Hybrid Projects use hub sites for the non-fixed portion of the service area.

Minimum Rurality Score: In order to be eligible to receive a grant, an application must receive a minimum of 20 points as an average score for all hub/end-user and end-user sites included in the project.

Rounding

Scores should be shown with their decimals rounded to 2 decimal places (i.e., 20.49999 rounds to 20.50).

C-2 Economic Need – Up to 30 Points

Economic Need is measured by the latest County SAIPE, poverty percentage, all ages, data found at US Census SAIPE data . This criterion will be used to evaluate the relative financial need of the applicant, community, and project. All applicants are required to provide the applicable SAIPE percentage based on the county where the hub, hub/end-user and end-user sites (as defined in §1734.3) are located.

Please use the Economic Need Worksheet to calculate the score. The Worksheet is available as an Excel worksheet at http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx .

The *Economic Need* score is based on **SAIPE data for the COUNTY where the hub/end-user and end-user sites are located**. *Exception*: Non-fixed end-user applications only use Hub sites in the calculation and Hybrid Projects use Hub sites for the Non-fixed portion of the service area. The SAIPE data used is from the column "**poverty percentage, all ages**".

Determining the Economic Need Score:

The project SAIPE percentage will be determined by the average of the county percentages for all of the end-user sites. For purposes of averaging, if a hub is also utilized as an end-user site, the hub will be considered as an end-user site.
The applicant will receive points as follows:

County SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 30 percent - ***30 points***
County SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 20 percent but less than 30 percent - ***20 points***
County SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 10 percent but less than 20 percent - ***10 points***
County SAIPE percentage less than 10% percent - ***0 points***

How is the score calculated?

1. The "Average SAIPE" entered on the *Economic Need Worksheet* is the average of the relevant eligibility percentages for all the hub/end-user and end-user sites. When calculating the average, use the eligibility percentages exactly as presented in the Census data, one decimal place.

2. Do not round: After calculating the average, enter it in the "Average SAIPE" block on the Economic Need Worksheet.

3. Use the scoring table below (it also appears on the Economic Need Worksheet) to enter the score in the "Applicant's Estimated Economic Need Score" block.

SAIPE County Percentage:	Points
SAIPE < 10%	0
10% ≤ SAIPE < 20%	10
20% ≤ SAIPE < 30%	20
30% ≤ SAIPE	30

4. Hub/End-User and End-User sites located within geographic areas for which no SAIPE data exist will be determined to have an average SAIPE poverty percentage of 30%. Such geographic areas may include territories and other locations eligible for funding through the DLT program.

C-3 Special Consideration – 10 Points

- RUS will offer special consideration to applications that have STEM education or opioid or other substance use disorder treatment as their primary purpose. The special consideration purpose must be fully defined in the Executive Summary and the Needs and Benefits sections of the application. The applicant should identify any certifications, credentials, or other relevant specialized training that demonstrates the ability of the instructors/councilors/medical professionals to provide the STEM education or opioid or other substance use disorder treatment.

- Special consideration will also be given to applications that have at least one end-user site physically located in an Opportunity Zone. An Opportunity Zone is an economically distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. Localities qualify as Opportunity Zones if they have been nominated for that designation by the State and that nomination has been certified by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury via delegation of authority to the Internal Revenue Service. See https://www.cdfifund.gov/pages/opportunity-zones.aspx for the list of current Opportunity Zones. See https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/opportunity-zones-frequently-asked-questions for additional information.

- Applications that qualify in any of the categories listed above will be awarded 10 points. Special Consideration points should be specifically requested using the sample Special Consideration Worksheet or a similar document. The sample worksheet is also available as an Excel worksheet at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx.

STEM

For the purpose of the DLT program, STEM education is defined as education in the various science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines. STEM encompasses a wide range of academic and technical subjects, including the physical sciences, life sciences, natural sciences, information technology, engineering and mathematics education. STEM includes health care programs that train students for careers in the medical or scientific research fields. STEM also includes career/technical education and apprenticeships in any of the STEM fields, which can be considered Applied STEM.

STEM education eligible purposes include:

- Classes offering STEM curriculum
- Training in STEM fields, including apprenticeships and instructor training

- Laboratory or other equipment that contributes to the live interactive STEM curriculum

Opioid or other Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment

For the purpose of the DLT program, opioid or other SUD treatment is defined as the interactive communication between medical or educational professionals and people with SUD or their families, other treatment professionals or those who interact with people with SUD.

Opioid or other SUD treatment eligible purposes include:

- Counseling of people with SUD
- Treatment of people with SUD
- Training of medical professionals, counselors or first responders in the interaction with people with SUD.
- Education programs addressing SUD

C-4 Need for Service and Project Benefits – Up to 30 Points

This criterion measures the extent to which the proposed project meets the need for distance learning or telemedicine services in rural areas. It also evaluates benefits derived from the services proposed by the project, and local community involvement in planning, implementing, and financial assistance of the project.

RUS will consider the applicant's documentation explaining the educational or healthcare challenges and related economic needs facing the community, the applicant's proposed plan to address these challenges, how the grant can help, and why the applicant cannot complete the project without a grant. RUS will also consider the extent to which the applicant provides evidence that the educational or healthcare challenges could not be addressed without employing advanced technology. RUS will also consider any support by recognized experts in educational or healthcare-related fields, any documentation substantiating the educational or health care underserved nature of the applicant's proposed service area, and any justification for specific educational or medical services which are needed and will provide direct benefits to rural residents.

Some examples of benefits to be provided by the project include, but are not limited to:

1. Improved educational opportunities for a specified number of students;
2. Travel time and money saved by telemedicine diagnoses;
3. Number of doctors retained in rural areas;

4. Number of additional students electing to attend higher education institutions;
5. Lives saved due to prompt medical diagnoses and treatment;
6. New education courses offered, including college level courses;
7. Expanded use of educational facilities such as night training;
8. Number of patients receiving telemedicine diagnoses;
9. Provision of training, information resources, library assets, adult education, lifetime learning, community use of technology, jobs, connection to region, nation, and world.

Other matters that will be considered by RUS under this criterion include:

1. That rural residents, and other beneficiaries, desire the educational or medical services to be provided by the project. A strong indication of need is the willingness of local end-users or institutions, to the extent possible, to contribute to the capital costs of establishing the project. This could include letters of financial commitment toward the project from local institutions.

2. The extent of the project's planning, development, and support by local residents and institutions. This may include evidence of community involvement, as exemplified in community meetings, public forums, and surveys. In addition, applicants should provide evidence of local residents' participation in the project planning and development. Additionally, a complete project may require items that are ineligible as grant or match, such as a building addition or a vehicle for mobile telemedicine. Although not eligible for in-kind matching credit, any kind of financial support and contributions from the local community (other than the applicant) does show evidence of the commitment of the community to the project.

3. The extent to which the application addresses the problems of population out-migration and how the project seeks to slow, halt, or prevent population loss.

Need for Services

Clearly state the economic, geographic, educational, or health care challenges facing the project's respective communities and provide any documentation that demonstrates the challenges. Use verifiable data and statistics to substantiate and quantify these challenges. **Demonstrate how the proposed project will help resolve these challenges** and why the applicant cannot afford the project without a grant.

Document support for the project provided by professionals in the educational or health care fields. The more specific their professional opinion is regarding the situation and the proposed project as a solution, the more compelling it is. Substantiate the underserved educational or health care nature of the project's proposed service area; and justify, explain, and document the specific educational or medical services that will provide direct benefits to rural residents.

Demonstrate demand by rural residents and other beneficiaries for the educational or medical services that the project would provide. Show that the project is designed to meet local community needs.

Benefits Derived from Services

In addition to documenting the need for services, describe how the project would assist the community in solving these challenges. **Document the specific benefits of the project and quantify them in terms of expected outcomes**. Tie the benefits of the project DIRECTLY to the stated needs the project is intended to address. Provide measurable targets or goals such as estimates of the number of people that will benefit from the project.

Examples

For a distance learning project that serves secondary schools, provide the **number of schools and students** that will benefit. The applicant should also document all other benefits provided by the project with quantifiable goals when possible such as:

- four-year foreign language availability up from 300 to 1,200 students;
- organic chemistry offered for first time to entire district;
- expanded educational facility use, such as evening vocational training;
- a reduction in the rate of high school dropouts from 17% to 12%.

For a telemedicine project that serves a group of hospitals, provide the **number of health care facilities and the potential number of patients** to benefit. The applicant should also **document** all other benefits provided by the project such as:

- time and monetary savings to the community from telemedicine diagnoses;
- 400 patients receiving at-home monitoring;
- 4 doctors retained in the community or medical staff trained;
- lives saved due to prompt medical diagnoses.

Document any ancillary benefits or multiple uses that would create added value in the rural communities which the project will serve. Examples include training, information resources, library assets, adult education, lifetime learning, and job creation. If applicable, address particular community problems such as out-migration and the extent to which the project would reduce or prevent population loss.

Local community involvement in planning, implementing, and financial assistance of the project.

Address the participation by local residents and organizations in planning and developing the project. Include evidence of this participation in the application. Examples of evidence of

community involvement include community meetings, public forums and surveys. Willingness of local end-users or community-based organizations to contribute to the costs of completing, operating, or maintaining the project is a strong indication of community support. Documentation of support includes letters of financial and non-financial commitment towards the project from local organizations.

Discuss Other Projects involving DLT Awards

DLT Grants cannot be awarded to projects that duplicate facilities. Existing DLT awardees can submit applications for new projects that are distinct from previously funded projects, either because they are for completely separate purposes or technology or because they propose to serve new service areas. If any of the sites or service territory in the project as described in the application are part of another application in FY 2020 or were part of a project funded through this program in the past, explain any relationship between or among these projects and discuss the specific need and benefit that will be provided by the proposed project. In particular, discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts. (Provide a more thorough discussion of project overlaps in the Telecommunications System Plan, as described above. In the absence of an explanation, overlaps in projects are assumed to be duplication and as a consequence, the project could be rejected as ineligible.)

In addition, applicants with previous awards should discuss the implementation of the previous award with respect to the use of funds. This is particularly true if funds from the former award have not yet been drawn down in its entirety.

D. Matching Requirements

The grant applicant's minimum matching contribution must equal 15% of the grant amount requested. Matching contributions generally must be in the form of cash. However, in-kind contributions solely for the purposes listed in §1734.21 may be substituted for cash and appropriately identified on the budget worksheet.

Funding Commitment from other sources

The applicant must provide evidence, in form and substance satisfactory to RUS, that funding agreements have been obtained to ensure completion of the project. These agreements shall be sufficient to ensure:

a) Payment of all proposed expenditures for the project;
b) All required matching contributions in § 1734.22; and
c) Any other funds necessary to complete the project.

Please use the Matching Worksheet to calculate the match percentage. The Worksheet is available as an Excel worksheet at http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx. Additionally, documentation submitted in support of the application should reflect all financial support for the project from non-Federal sources as required by §1734.22. The applicant must provide evidence, from authorized representatives of the sources, of a commitment that the funds are available and will be used for the project.

Special Matching Provisions for American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Under Federal law, applications from these areas are exempt from matching requirements up to $200,000. The maximum DLT Grant in FY 2020 is $1,000,000 and the required minimum match is 15%, or $150,000. This means that for the FY 2020 DLT Treatment Grant Program, these areas are not required to provide a minimum match.

Eligible purposes for in-kind matching funds are identical to eligible purposes for a DLT grant.

For a line-item identified as in-kind to be eligible for match funding, the application must demonstrate:

1. The match is used for eligible purposes;

2. That none of the use is to benefit sites not shown in the scoring; and

3. That the predominant purpose (over 50% of use) of that line-item is for purposes which meet the DLT grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine.

If any part of an in-kind line-item is for ineligible purposes, the line-item cannot be budgeted for match. To be eligible, items proposed as match must be integral to the project in exactly the same way as items the applicant proposes to obtain with the grant. The technology purchased with DLT grant monies or credited as in-kind match items are intended to build distance learning or telemedicine systems that would not otherwise be financially possible if not for the grant.

Federal funds are not eligible as matching funds. E-rate funds are federal funds and cannot be applied as matching funds to a DLT project.

Special Matching Provisions for projects located in eligible counties under Counties in Appalachia. If counties in the proposed project are any of the counties eligible under this provision, Appalachian Regional Commission ("ARC") funds may be used as a matching contribution. Please see www.arc.gov for a list of eligible counties under the Counties in Appalachia heading. Applying ARC funds as a match requires coordination with ARC State Program Managers and States in the Region. See the ARC Members, Partners and Staff link also at www.arc.gov for ARC State Program Managers contact information. DLT applicants considering an ARC match are strongly encouraged to contact their ARC State Program Manager(s) early in the process to explore the feasibility of an ARC grant.

Use of non-Federal Grants as Matching Funds: To document the match, include a copy of the announcement letter from the grantor. The letter from the grantor must be explicit about the purpose of the grant and not have limitations or exclusions, and the funds must be available at the time of application submission. If another grant is to be used as matching funds toward the DLT Grant application, include a letter from the grantor stating that the money in that grant is available and can be applied to the purposes of the DLT Grant.

Types of Matching Funds

Cash

Most applicants propose to provide a cash match for the project. When this occurs, reimbursements for approved purposes are made on a pro-rata basis with the applicant being reimbursed for the approved Grant Percentage of the presented invoiced cost.

In-Kind Match

An in-kind match must be integral to and necessary for the DLT project, not simply a technology purchase made in the same timeframe. Unlike cash, in-kind matches are tied directly to the eligibility of the proposed in-kind item**. If an item is not eligible or not integral to and necessary for the project, the item will be removed from the grant and match budget and the proposed match will not be credited.** This could make the application ineligible.

In-kind items must be non-depreciated or new assets, not installed, with established monetary values.

Costs incurred by the applicant, or others on behalf of the applicant, for facilities or equipment installed, or other services rendered prior to submission of a completed application, shall not be considered as an eligible in-kind matching contribution.

In-kind match from vendors, in the form of equipment; is not eligible.

Funding Commitments

The applicant must provide, in form and substance satisfactory to RUS, funding agreements that have been obtained to ensure completion of the project. These agreements, which must be placed in this section of the Application, shall be sufficient to ensure:

a) Payment of all proposed expenditures for the project;
b) All required matching contribution as required by 1734.22;
c) Any additional funding provided in accordance with §1734.25(g).

Match Documentation Specifics - The applicant must document the project's proposed matching funds in form and substance satisfactory to the Agency. The documentation must be placed under Section D of the application. Each proposed match entry on the Leveraging Worksheet must be supported by a signed letter from the entity proposing the match, including when the entity is the applicant.

1. **Be signed by a person capable of obligating the donor organization.** Include the printed name and title of the person signing the letter. The letter must clearly indicate the name of the donor organization and state that the funds are committed to the proposed DLT project as described in the Budget and elsewhere in the application. If the name and title do not appear on the donor organization's letterhead, attach evidence of the signer's authority to obligate the funds.

2. **If the match is cash, state the dollar amount**. Letters without a **stated cash amount** cannot be credited as a cash match.

3. **If the proposed match is in-kind**, state the actual dollar amount and give a complete description of the donation identified by the line-item number in the budget and the expected date of purchase. Letters that do not identify the line-items in the budget cannot be credited as an in-kind match. Keep in mind that items acquired before the application submission date are not eligible for grant or match. Also, demonstrate how the established monetary value of the item was determined. Applicants that do not submit adequate documentation for in-kind match as specified will have their in-kind match disallowed. Proposed matches must be consistent on the SF-424, the Budget, and the

Matching Worksheets. Equipment operational prior to submission of application cannot be considered in-kind.

4. **Discounts and Donations:** In review of applications submitted in the past, it was determined that vendor donated matches did not have value without a required, subsequent purchase of vendor equipment or licenses with grant funds. For example, in many grant applications, software licenses were donated in satisfaction of the matching requirement. However, such licenses only worked with, and thus only had value with, the same vendor's equipment. Additionally, by side agreement, grant applicants were required to purchase the vendor's equipment once the grant was made with grant funds. The Agency determined that such a practice violated federal procurement standards found at 2 CFR part 200.317-326, given that the grant applicant could not put the purchase out for bid, either because no other equipment would work with the "donated" licenses, or because they were contractually obligated to buy the equipment before the grant was made. As such, the Agency has determined that vendor matches requiring subsequent purchases, either by necessity or contract, are not permitted.

E. Scope of Work

Provide a narrative (with charts, if needed) explaining the Scope of Work. Make a clear and convincing presentation of how the goals of the project will be achieved. The scope of work completes the picture for the reviewer. It discusses how the organization proposes to proceed with the project**. An application that does not include a scope of work cannot be evaluated and could be returned as ineligible.**

The scope of work must include, at a minimum, the following:

1. The **specific activities** to be performed under the project;

2. **Who** will carry out the activities;

3. The **timeframes** for accomplishing the project objectives and activities; and

4. A **budget** for all capital expenditures reflecting the line item costs for approved purposes for both the grant funds and the matching funds for the project. Separately, the budget must specify any line item costs that are nonapproved purposes for grants as contained in §1734.23.

Additional Guidance for the Budget: The budget is a required document for RUS to evaluate an application. The Budget worksheet with instructions is available in Appendix A. An Excel spreadsheet for completing the budget is also available on our website at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants

a) The Budget should show each cost as a **line-item**. The items listed and described in the Telecommunications System Plan (Section H) should track line-by-line with the entries in the budget.
b) Do not combine items into lump sums that cannot be evaluated individually by the Agency. The individual parts have to be evaluated for cost comparison and program eligibility.
c) Provide detail such as the brand and model number, i.e., "VideoKing TX-90, $5,600," as opposed to "One Video System, $75,000 each site;" Installation," $50,000; or "Wiring, $100,000."
d) If, in the project, a user fee or license fee is required to use grant or match purchased equipment, it must be presented as such in the application.
e) Final budget total should be rounded to the nearest whole dollar amount.

F. Financial Information and Sustainability

The applicant must provide a narrative description demonstrating the feasibility of the project, including having sufficient resources and expertise necessary to undertake and complete the project and, how the project will be sustained following completion of the project.
The application needs to show that funding is available for the three-year period that it takes to put together the project (required for eligibility), and to ensure the project's continuance as a viable community resource.

Provide a narrative description that addresses the project's feasibility. The narrative should include a description of the project's leadership, its technical expertise, and how leadership and technical expertise is distributed throughout all of the sites or the service territory. Describe how the flow of funds and institutional financial support (local government, businesses, school system, university or foundation) will sustain the project and maintain a continuity of service. The narrative should include all assumptions and the following information:

- A description of the project's revenues and expenses in the project budget;
- Evidence of cost-sharing arrangements among hub and end-user sites, if applicable;
- Identification of any other items that may affect feasibility or sustainability of the project.

G. Statement of Experience

Provide a written narrative describing the organization's demonstrated capability and experience in operating an educational or health care endeavor and any project similar to the proposed project. Experience in a similar project is desirable but not required. If the organization does not have experience with projects like the proposed project, the application should explain how this lack of experience will be overcome.

H. Telecommunications System Plan

A telecommunications system plan (TSP) consisting of the following:

1. The capabilities of the telecommunications terminal equipment, including a description of the specific equipment which will be used to deliver the proposed service. The applicant must document discussions with various technical sources which could include consultants, engineers, product vendors, or internal technical experts, provide detailed cost estimates for operating and maintaining the end-user equipment and provide evidence that alternative equipment and technologies were evaluated.

2. A complete listing of the proposed telecommunications terminal equipment, telecommunications transmission facilities, data terminal equipment, interactive video equipment, computer hardware and software systems, and components that process data for transmission via telecommunications, computer network components, communication satellite ground station equipment, or any other elements of the telecommunications system designed to further the purposes of this subpart, that the applicant intends to build or fund using RUS financial assistance.

3. A description of the consultations with the appropriate telecommunications carriers (including interexchange carriers, cable television operators, enhanced service providers, providers of satellite services and telecommunications equipment manufacturers and distributors) and the anticipated role of such providers in the proposed telecommunications system.

4. A successful DLT grant application includes a well-planned TSP, starting with a diagram or map of the proposed system overlaid with a geographic map of the service area. Also included in the TSP are other diagrams (if necessary), technical descriptions, and a narrative accounting of each item in the budget.

5. The TSP shows the sites (hubs, hub/end-users, or end-users) that will participate in the project and where the equipment will be located. It shows how the equipment is interconnected and how the distance learning or telemedicine benefits flow from the hub sites to the rural end-user sites.

Telecommunications System Plan

<u>System Plan Map/Diagram</u>

Attach a map or a drawing which is a spatial representation of the service area encompassing the project, displaying an overlay of the proposed distance learning or telemedicine system, including hub sites and end-users. This map can be displayed as a series of maps containing an overview, followed by close-up maps of individual sites.

Each site, hub and end-user, must be represented on the map. This representation need not be to scale, but it must be representational of the project, not generic. These generic network diagrams, usually depicting some kind of campus architecture are by themselves insufficient. However, applicants can provide network diagrams (without geographic references) if they can also provide geographic maps that reference the diagrams. Nevertheless, an application that does not contain a map that shows each site could be difficult to evaluate, thereby losing competitive value when compared to applications that present visual clarity of their project.

System Plan Narrative:

Provide a narrative describing the overall DLT network and the proposed equipment's use in the network. Detail each item in the Scope of Work budget by line number - what it is, how it will be used in the network and how does it qualify as a DLT use. Provide justification of the equipment based on discussions with technical experts. Discuss any possible duplication of other DLT efforts and how this project avoids such duplication. Discuss the applicant's involvement in any previous USDA DLT grants or current USDA DLT grant application.

- Some items requested for DLT funding will have more general uses than other equipment, which may have 100% distance learning or telemedical purposes. For each item, specify the percentage of use that can be attributed to purposes that meet the DLT grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine, explain how those percentages were determined, and address the capabilities of the proposed equipment/software. The percentage of use is only to be used for analysis as part of line item explanations. Do not breakout items in the actual budget by percentage of use.
- Document discussions with various technical sources, such as consultants, engineers, product vendors or internal technical experts.
- Address whether or not any part of the project will duplicate any adequate, established telemedicine or distance learning services already in operation. In particular, discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts. Describe the status of previous projects and, in particular, the extent to which the funds have been drawn for eligible grant purposes. **Please note that the Non-duplication of Services Certificate must be included within the application, in the certification section. The form is in Appendix A.**
- Identify any previous grants that the applicant has received from this program in the past and how they would affect the project proposed in the current application.
- This applies not only to prior grants received by the current applicant, but to grant funding that may have gone to any of the end-user sites in the current proposal via a grant received by another entity.
- Discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts. Specify the progress/status of any previous awards and the extent of grant and match funds expended toward completing those projects.

- Discuss whether or not any of the sites in the current project are included as participants in another application for a Fiscal Year 2020 DLT Grant.
- In the absence of any explanation, overlaps in projects are assumed to be duplication and, as a consequence, the application could be deemed ineligible.

Failure to provide a well written and through Technical Service Plan may result in the application being rejected.

I. Compliance with other Federal Statutes

Appendix A contains certification forms to demonstrate compliance with other Federal statutes and regulations. There are six required certifications numbered from I-1 through I-6. Applicants must include the certifications from Appendix A for I-2, I-3, I-4, I-5, and I-6 within the application. The applicant attests to these certifications by executing and including the FY2020 DLT Checklist under this section. Certifications I-2 and I-3 require additional selection or discussion as stated in the certification. I-1 must be completed as part of this section by downloading and executing the form. See Appendix A for the form download link.

A number of certifications which used to be required as separate forms are now addressed by the financial assistance certifications and representations in SAM.gov. Applicants are required to have made these certifications and representations as part of their SAM.gov registration in order to be eligible for a grant. See page 8 for more details.

FY2020 DLT Application Checklist can be found on our website:
https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants

Important Note: If the applicant is applying as a consortium which does not have the legal authority to contract with the Government (See Eligibility Requirements Section of the Application Guide with respect to Legal Eligibility), each entity that comprises the consortium must provide a set of these certifications. However, if the consortium has a designated host entity which will be legally responsible for execution of the grant documents, only the host entity is required to submit certifications.

I-1 Assurance Agreement
I-2 Certificate regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions
I-3 Certification regarding Federal Collection Policies for Commercial Debt
I-4 Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970
I-5 Certificate Regarding Architectural Barriers
I-6 Non-Duplication of Services Certificate

J. Evidence of Legal Existence and Authority to Contract with the Federal Government

Eligibility Criteria

The applicant must provide evidence with respect to legal eligibility, legal existence, and legal authority to contract with The United States Government (See 7 CFR 1734.4).

1. Legal Eligibility: The applicant must be legally organized as an incorporated organization, an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304 and (c), a state or local unit of government, a consortium, as defined in § 1734.3, or other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for profit or not-for profit basis. If a consortium lacks the legal capacity to contract, each individual entity must contract with RUS in its own behalf. *Evidence of tax status from the Internal Revenue Service or a state department of taxation is not evidence of legal eligibility.*

2. Legal Existence: The applicant must provide acceptable evidence of legal existence. Corporations or LLCs must provide evidence of good standing in accordance with the laws of the state or other body under which they are organized. For entities that exist under law, rather than through incorporation or other action (such as school districts or hospital districts), a copy of the state statute, regulation, or other appropriate documentation must be provided to confirm the legal name of the entity. Evidence of tax status from the Internal Revenue Service or a state department of taxation is not evidence of legal existence.

3. SAM.gov registration: The applicant must provide a printout of the organization's SAM.gov registration which clearly identifies the CAGE code assigned by SAM.gov and confirms the registration was active before the application was submitted. The SAM.gov registration must remain active with current information while RUS is considering an application and while a Federal Grant Award or loan is active. To maintain the registration in the SAM.gov database the applicant must review and update annually. The applicant must ensure that the information in the database is current, accurate, and complete.

The Entity Name, DUNS Number and SAM.gov registration must be for the applicant. It cannot be for a parent, subsidiary or other affiliated entity.

It is important that the exact name of the legal entity applying for the grant be listed in block 8 of the SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance, and that the entity be legally eligible to receive the award and take legal ownership over items acquired under the grant.

Applications that do not demonstrate both the applicant's legal existence as an entity that is eligible to apply for a grant and its legal authority to contract with the United States Government will be returned as ineligible.

Additional Guidance for Consortia:

As defined in 7 CFR 1734, consortium means a combination or group of entities undertaking the purposes for which the distance learning and telemedicine financial assistance is provided. At least one of the entities in a consortium must meet the requirements of § 1734.4.

a) If the applicant is an existing established consortium with the legal ability to contract with the Federal Government, the consortium must provide documentation as listed in Section J above.

b) If the applicant is an informal consortium which by itself lacks the legal capacity to contract with the Federal Government, the applicant must have a legally organized fiscal agent which is part of the consortium. The fiscal agent must submit documentation as listed in Section J above.

   Under this approach, if the entity receives an award and does not take steps to establish itself as a legal entity, one of the following approaches must be followed to receive the award.

   1. The fiscal agent assumes sole responsibility for the grant and is legally responsible for the execution of the grant documents. The fiscal agent will be solely responsible for ownership and control of all assets acquired with the grant funds regardless of where they are installed; or

   2. If the fiscal agent does not assume sole responsibility for the grant, each organization within the consortium must confirm its legal existence and have the legal authority to contract with the government, will be a party to the grant agreement, and will be required to sign the grant documents. Under this scenario, each party will be responsible for the performance of the entire grant project, and each will be able to own and control assets acquired with the grant funds.

K. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation

The applicant must provide details of the project's impact on the environment and historic preservation. Grants made under this part are subject to part 1794 of this chapter which contains RUS' policies and procedures for implementing a variety of Federal statutes, regulations, and executive orders generally pertaining to the protection of the quality of the human environment that are listed in 7 CFR 1794.1. The application shall contain a separate section entitled

"Environmental Impact of the Project." The applicant may use the "Environmental Questionnaire," in Appendix A, to assist in complying with the requirements of this section.

For projects requesting funding of broadband facilities, an Environmental Questionnaire must be completed to provide information on environmental compliance. Applicants must complete and submit an Environmental Questionnaire (see Appendix A) in accordance with 7 CFR 1970, for any external facilities that will be constructed with Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program funds. A copy of 7 CFR Part 1970 can be retrieved from: https://www.ecfr.gov.

Applications not proposing broadband facilities must provide an Environment Impact Survey consisting of a brief project description with a statement of why the project will not impact the environment.

L. Consultation with USDA State Director

The applicant must provide evidence that the organization has consulted with the USDA State Director for Rural Development about the availability of other sources of funding available at the State or local level. Include this evidence as part of the application.

When requesting evidence of consultation with the USDA State Director, applicants should provide an executive summary of the project as well as the proposed grant and match amounts to the State Director to enable them to make an informed determination. Failure to provide this information may delay receipt of the State Director's consultation evidence.

Note: Applicants should contact the USDA State Director as early as possible in the application process. A listing of the State Rural Development Offices can be found at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices.

M. Supplemental Information

The applicant can use this section to provide any additional information it considers relevant to the project and likely to be helpful in determining the extent to which the project will further the purposes of the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program.

Appendix A - Forms

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Rurality Worksheet 411
Economic Need Worksheet (SAIPE) 433
Matching Worksheet 444
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Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

All applicants requesting funding under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program must complete the Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424). Additional instructions for specific line items also are included below. The form and any attachments referenced in this Guide can also be found on our website at https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants.

Additional Instructions for the SF-424

Block 1: Applicants should select "Application" for their submission. If an applicant makes changes to a submitted application, please select "Change/Corrected Application" for the resubmission. It is very important RUS understands which application should be reviewed when multiple applications exist. It is the applicant's responsibility to identify the appropriate application for review.

Block 8: There are multiple entries in this block. The contact information provided in this box will be used by RUS for all contact and correspondence. Please complete this in full and attach a sheet if additional contacts need to be provided. It is crucial that the Agency has accurate information, including a reliable e-mail address for rapid correspondence. Otherwise, correspondence will be sent by mail. Full, accurate contact information must be provided for someone with the authority to answer any questions that RUS staff may have about the application.

To supply a contact from outside the applicant organization, attach a letter immediately behind the SF-424 listing these items: person's name, organization, contact information (phone, fax, e-mail, mailing address), relationship to the organization. Make sure the letter contains language granting authority to the person to answer our questions or provide additional information on behalf of the applicant, and any time or other limitations applied to that person's authority. This letter must be signed by the signatory on the SF-424.

As required by the Office of Management and Budget, all applicants for grants must supply a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. See instructions on Page 7 of this guide for assistance in obtaining a DUNS number

Block 10: The Name of the Federal Agency is Rural Utilities Service.

Block 11: The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number is 10.855.

Block 12: Funding Opportunity Number is RUS-20-01-DLT. The Title is "Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program".

Block 14: Please use the Site Worksheet to provide this information

Block 15: Brief descriptive title of project. **For Grants.gov applications, upload all application sections using the "Add Attachments" button under Block 15.**

Block 16: Please use the Site Worksheet to provide this information

Block 19: Program is covered by E.O. 12372. Go to https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/spoc_1_16_2020.pdf for state office contact information. Applicants must select option (a) or (b) determined by state participation. Use the above link to determine if the state, for which applicant resides, participates in SPOC.

Block 20: An explanation of the delinquency must be provided if "yes" is checked.

Block 21: Please be sure to check "I agree". The application must be signed by an authorized representative of the organization that will own and operate the project if the grant is awarded. If the authorized representative is not a corporate officer, evidence must be included that demonstrates that the authorized representative has authority to obligate the organization. If submitted electronically through Grants.gov, the application must be submitted by the authorized representative.

Site Worksheet

The site worksheet can be found at:
http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Site Worksheet

1. If using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at:
   http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants

   Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate the Sites. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all the Sites.

2. **Site Number** – Number each Site consecutively regardless of its designation. This number should be used consistently to identify each site in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.

3. **Site Name** – Input the official name of the site. Use this name consistently in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.

4. **Site Designation** – Designated each Site as Hub, Hub/End-User, or End-User according the definitions described under Section C1-Rurality Worksheets.

5. **Street Address, Town, County, State, 5 Digit ZIP** – Input the Street Address, Town or Place Name, County, State, and 5 Digit ZIP code for the Site location.

6. **Congressional District** – Input the Congressional District in which the Site is located. This information can be found on the House of Representatives website: www. House.gov.

Rurality Worksheet

The rurality worksheet can be found at:
http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Rurality Worksheet

1. Use the Excel worksheets provided on the Agency's website at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate the Sites. If additional rows are added, be sure to copy the cell references as well in order to carry the input information from the Site Worksheet. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all Sites.

2. **Site Number** – Number each Site consecutively regardless of its designation. This number should be used consistently to identify each site in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.

5. **Site Name** – Input the official name of the site. Use this name consistently in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.

6. **Site Designation** – Designated each Site as Hub, Hub/End-User, or End-User according to the guidance on Page 12 of this guide.

7. **Town or Place** – Input the Town or Place Name, in which the Site is located.

8. **Population** – Input the population from the 2010 Census, guidance provided in Appendix B. If town or place is neither located in the Census, nor found in the listing of cities, towns, and places in the Atlas, there is a possibility that the community is so rural that it is not associated with any Census- recognized community. If this is the case, the location would be considered by the RUS DLT Program as 'Census Rural' and be reported as an "Exceptionally Rural Area".

9. **Rurality Score** – Input the Rurality Score for each End-User or Hub/End-User site according to the following table:

   EXCEPTIONALLY RURAL AREA – **5,000 and under: 4*0 Points***. Any area of the USA not included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants.

   RURAL AREA – **5,001-10,000: *30 Points***. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 inhabitants.

MID-RURAL AREA – **10,001-20,000: *20 Points***. Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.

URBAN AREA - **Over 20,000: *0 Points*.** Any area of the USA included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.

NOTE: Enter the hub and end-user sites in the same order as shown on the Site Worksheet. Enter the population associated with each hub and end-user site. **Do not** score or include the hub site in the final calculation of the Rurality score. The hub information is required in case the review of a site determines it to be an end-user site or combination hub/end-user site, in which case it will be included in the determination of the Rurality score. See section **C-1 Rurality** of this Application Guide for additional instructions.

Economic Need Worksheet (SAIPE)

The economic need worksheet can be found at:
http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Economic Need Worksheet

1. Use the Excel worksheets provided on the Agency's website at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate the Sites. If additional rows are added, be sure to copy the cell references as well in order to carry the input information from the Site Worksheet. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all the Sites.

2. **Site Number** – Number each Site consecutively regardless of its designation. This number should be used consistently to identify each site in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.

3. **Site Name** – Input the official name of the site. Use this name consistently in the Site Worksheet, Rurality Worksheet and Economic Need Worksheet.

4. **Site Designation** – Designated each Site as Hub, Hub/End-User, or End-User according to the guidance in the Application Guide.

5. **County** – Input the County in which the Site is located.

6. **SAIPE Percent Poverty, All Ages** – Input the percent of county residents that are impoverished as identified in the most recent US Census SAIPE spreadsheet. If the site is located within a geographic area for which no SAIPE data exists (e.g. insular territories), enter 30%, and make mention of it in the Executive Summary.

7. **Economic Need Score** – Calculate the Average SAIPE percentage and input the Economic Need Score according to the following table:

SAIPE County Percentage:	Points
SAIPE < 10%	0
10% ≤ SAIPE < 20%	10
20% ≤ SAIPE < 30%	20
30% ≤ SAIPE	30

Matching Worksheet

The matching worksheet can be found at:
http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Matching Worksheet

1. If using the Excel worksheets provided on our website at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate the Matching Contributions. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed to list all Matching Contributions.

2. List each matching contribution and the dollar value on separate line items.

3. Input the total value of the matching contributions in Line 1 at the bottom of the sheet.

4. Input the total grant request in Line 2 at the bottom of the sheet.

5. Calculate the percent match and input in Line 3.

6. Match must be a minimum of 15%

7. Matching funds must be documented as described in the Application Guide. Place letters of financial commitment and other match documentation along with this form under Section D of the application package. Each donor's match must be supported by a matching letter. Matches not properly documented will not be credited. Depending on the consequent reduction of the match, this could lower the score or make the project ineligible (i.e., if resultant match is < 15%)

Special Consideration Worksheet

Use the Excel worksheets provided on the Agency's website at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants. Please print and sign the form, or print and sign the form included in this application guide.

1. An authorized representative must sign and date this form.

Document any special consideration request as described in the Application Guide.

Budget Worksheet

The budget worksheet can be found at:
http://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2020_DLT_Worksheets_0.xlsx

Instructions for Completing Budget Worksheet

1. Use the Excel worksheets provided on the Agency's website at: http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants. Please insert additional rows as needed to accommodate the Budget items. If using a printed form, please use additional copies as needed.

2. Site Name – Insert Site Name, consistent with previous worksheets, where equipment will be installed.

3. Description – Provide a detailed description, such as brand and model number, for the equipment to be purchased.

4. Unit Cost – Provide the cost for purchasing one unit of the equipment

5. # of Units – Provide the number of units to be purchased for the site

6. Extended Cost: Grant and Cash Match – Provide the total amount of grant and cash match funds which will be used to purchase the line item.

7. Extended Cost: In-Kind Match – Provide the total value of the equipment which will be provided as an in-kind match.

8. Place Totals of each column in the Totals boxes. **Round total request to the nearest whole dollar amount.**

9. Line A is the total of the Grant/Cash Match column and the In-Kind Match column and represents the total cost of the project

10. Line B is the total amount of Cash Match contributed to the project and supported by the Matching Worksheet and documentation

11. Line C is the total amount of In-Kind Match contributed to the project and supported by the Matching Worksheet and documentation.

12. Line D is Line A minus Line B and Line C. This should reconcile with the Grant Request on the Form SF 424 Block 18 Line a. Federal.

13. Grant to Match check is the match provided on Line B + Line C divided by the grant request on Line D. This should equal a minimum of 15%.

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program: Broadband Facility

Overview

The USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is required to assess the impacts of proposed federal actions, such as the provision of financial assistance through the DLT Grant Program, to the human environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other federal, state, and local environmental laws. Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program applicants proposing to construct Broadband Facilities must complete an Environmental Questionnaire (EQ) and submit it with their applications. The attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet can help to focus the environmental review process and the information provided as part of the EQ depending on the project activity. The EQ provides information to RUS so that it can either complete the environmental review process or determine the appropriate level of additional impact analyses needed, in accordance with RUS Environmental Policies and Procedures, 7 CFR 1970 (https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=be582d41f15145ec19384e8522198e33&mc=true&node=pt7.14.1970&rgn=div5). RUS will notify applicants if additional information or analyses are necessary beyond what was submitted in the EQ.

No construction activities may begin until final environmental approval from RUS is granted. In accordance with 7 CFR § 1970.12, awardees are prohibited from taking actions that may have an adverse environmental impact or limit the choice of practicable alternatives that may be considered until RUS has concluded the environmental review process. If the proposed project involves construction activities or property acquisition, the applicant is generally prohibited from acquiring, rehabilitating, converting, leasing, repairing or constructing property or facilities, or committing or expending Agency or non-Agency funds until after RUS has concluded its environmental review requirements.

An applicant may submit to RUS a copy of any environmental review document that has been prepared in connection with obtaining permits, approvals, or other financing for the proposed project from state, local or other federal agencies. Such material, to the extent determined to be relevant, may be used to fulfill RUS environmental review requirements.
Applicants should not reference items provided in other parts of the application package in the EQ; all materials relevant to the EQ must be integrated herein to facilitate timely review.

NOTE: It is imperative an applicant start the consultation process with applicable agencies, if required, before submitting the application. If consultation is required, but evidence that the process has begun is not provided, or if special or highly sensitive issues are not adequately addressed, RUS may deem the application to be incomplete and reject it on that basis. Engage relevant agencies early; be aware of any significant issues before applying; consider designs that bypass sensitive areas, and work to fully address the requested information.

Requested Information

1. **Project Description and Location:** Describe all project-related construction activities, including, but not limited to, the construction or renovation of any buildings, the construction and installation of cable (buried or aerial), or the installation of telecommunications transmission facilities including construction of new towers or collocations. Complete descriptions, locations and mapping must be provided for each site affected by project-related construction activities (recommend U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle maps at a map scale of 1: 24,000; larger scale maps may be provided for site-specific proposals). USGS maps may be obtained and purchased at the following website: http://www.usgs.gov/pubprod/maps.html. All project elements, if known at the time of the application, must be clearly depicted on any map provided. If appropriate, photographs or aerial photographs of site-specific proposals may be provided.

2. **Land Use:** Describe the amount of property to be cleared, excavated, fenced, or otherwise disturbed by the proposed project, and the current land use and zoning for each project site affected by construction. Document whether the proposed project is located on public land owned or managed by the federal government. For information related to federal lands see the following website (http://navigator.blm.gov). This website provides cadastral survey and land management information and data from the National Integrated Land System specifically the distribution of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), other survey-based data, and federal land boundaries. Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts related to land use can be found in Subpart L of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (http://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970l.pdf)

3. **Wetlands:** Describe and indicate whether wetlands are present on or near the project site(s) affected by proposed construction (maps of wetlands may be obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory website (https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/),or from soil maps obtained from the USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service's website (http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/soils/home/), focusing on areas of hydric soil(s)). If wetlands are identified within the project area, please document where the project components will be located in relation to the identified wetland areas. Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to wetlands can be found in Subpart G of Rural

Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (https://https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970g.pdf).

4. **Threatened and Endangered Species:** Describe and indicate whether any proposed project site(s) will directly or indirectly affect any threatened, endangered or candidate species, or is/are within or near critical habitats. Applicants must provide species lists and appropriate species accounts (i.e. requisite habitat) for each county affected by construction obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's website (https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/),Information about potential critical habitat areas should also be included and can be found on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's website noted above. The attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet gives further detail on the information to provide. Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to threatened and endangered species can be found in Subpart N of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970n.pdf).

5. **Floodplains:** Describe and indicate whether or not any facility(ies) or site(s) are located within a 100-year or 500-year floodplain. If any project-related construction activities are within a floodplain, a copy of a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that depicts construction activities must be included. Information related to floodplains and National Flood Insurance Maps may be obtained from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) website (https://msc.fema.gov/portal). Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to and from floodplains can be found in Subpart F of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970f.pdf).

6. **Coastal Areas**: Determine whether or not the project is within the boundaries of a coastal zone management area (CZMA). For boundary related and contact information related to CZMA, see National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management's website (https://coast.noaa.gov/) Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts to coastal areas can be found in Subpart O of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970o.pdf).

7. **Brownfields:** Determine whether the project is located within a brownfield site. Per 42 U.S.C. 9601, the term "brownfield site" means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Maps and locations of sites, facilities and properties that have been contaminated by hazardous materials and are being, or have been, cleaned up under EPA's Superfund, RCRA or brownfields cleanup programs can be found at the EPA's Cleanups in My Community website (https://www.epa.gov/cleanups/cleanups-my-community). Detailed guidance related to evaluating impacts from locating projects at brownfield sites can be found in Subpart J of

Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970j.pdf).

Section 106 Review: Applicants are delegated the authority to initiate consultation with State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) and engage with interested tribes related to their projects. Prior to initiating any communications, please see the attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet to determine whether the proposed project will require such communication. In some cases, statewide programmatic agreements may apply, please contact RUS for more information. Detailed guidance and template letters related to evaluating impacts to historic and cultural resources can be found at Subpart H of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970h.pdf).

Applications Not Subject to FCC Section 106 Reviews

Applicants who propose to use Federal Communications Commission (FCC) spectrum for their telecommunications towers and collocations note that the FCC has regulatory requirements for licensing radio spectrum to be carried by these facilities, and an established review process for ensuring compliance with Section 106 of NHPA. If the proposed tower or collocation will use FCC licensed spectrum, regardless of the height of the telecommunications tower, applicants must complete FCC's Section 106 review process – see: http://wireless.fcc.gov/siting/historic_preservation.html. If an application proposes a tower or collocation that will carry FCC spectrum, RUS has agreed that FCC will conduct Section 106 review for those facilities.

Applications Not Subject to FCC Section 106 Reviews or Statewide Programmatic Agreements

RUS will conduct Section 106 review for any new tower or collocation which will not carry FCC regulated spectrum and any other construction component of an application not subject to FCC review. Please follow the guidance in the attached Environmental Review Fact Sheet and in Subpart H of Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures to include all applicable information in the EQ (https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/1970h.pdf).

Additional Assistance/Contact Information

In addition to the resource specific references provided above, general NEPA related information and guidance can be found on the CEQ website (https://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/) or on the environmental section of the RUS website at https://www.rd.usda.gov/publications/environmental-studies/environmental-guidance.

For information related to Section 106 of NHPA, see the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation website - https://www.achp.gov/digital-library-section-106-landing/citizens-guide-section-106-review

Compliance Forms

Federal Statute/Regulation	Evidence of Compliance	Attachment
7 CFR Part 15, Subpart A	Assurance Agreement https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/USDA-CRAssuranceAgreementFormRD400-4.pdf	I-1
	Certification regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions Language is included on the following page; applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist. Applicant must indicate whether or not any buildings which are part of the project fall within a 100-year flood plain.	I-2
	Applicant Certification Federal Collection Policies for Commercial Debt Language is included on the following page; applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist. Applicant must provide details on any federal debt delinquency, as indicated in the language.	I-3
2 CFR part 200, as adopted by USDA through 2 CFR part 400.	Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 Certification Language is included on the following page; applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist.	I-4
	Certification regarding Architectural Barriers Language is included on the following page, applicant certified to it including the signed Application Checklist.	I-5
	Non-Duplication of Services Certificate Language is included on the following page; applicant agrees the language is certified to by including the signed Application Checklist.	I-6

Schedule I-2

Certificate Regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions

If the project is located in an area subject to flooding, flood insurance must be provided to the extent available and required under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended by the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4001 through 4128). If applicable, the insurance must cover, in addition to the buildings, any machinery, equipment, fixtures, and furnishings contained in the buildings. Rural Utilities Service will comply with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management (3 CFR, 1977 Comp., p. 117), and 7 CFR 1970, of this chapter in considering the application for the project.

Please provide an explanation below to the following questions:

Is the project not located in a 100-year flood plain; and therefore, no Flood Insurance is required?

Or

Is the project is located in a 100-year flood plain? If yes, who is or will be providing the required insurance.

Fill in the explanation:

The Applicant hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance during construction or installation of equipment and upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

Schedule I-3

Federal Obligations Certification on Delinquent Debt

IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?

Note: Example of debts include, but are not limited to, delinquent taxes, guaranteed or direct government loans (more than 31 days past due) and other administrative debts.

If Yes, provide explanatory information.

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

FEDERAL COLLECTION POLICIES FOR COMMERCIAL DEBT

The Federal Government is authorized by law to take any or all of the following actions in the event that a borrower's loan payments become delinquent or the borrower defaults on its loan: (1) Report the borrower's delinquent account to a credit bureau; (2) Assess additional interest and penalty charges for the period of time that payment is not made; (3) Assess charges to cover additional administrative costs incurred by the Government to service the borrower's account; (4) Offset amounts owed to the borrower under other Federal programs; (5) Refer the borrower's debt to the Internal Revenue Service for offset against any amount owed to the borrower as an income tax refund; (6) Refer the borrower's account to a private collection agency to collect the amount due; and (7) Refer the borrower's account to the Department of Justice for litigation in the courts.

All of these actions can and will be used to recover any debts owed when it is determined to be in the interest of the Government to do so.

Schedule I-4

Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition

Policies Act of 1970 Certification

The Applicant assures that it will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4601-4655, and with implementing Federal regulations in 49 CFR 24 and 7 CFR 21.

Specifically, the Applicant assures that:

Whenever Federal financial assistance is used to pay for any part of the cost of a program or project which will result in the displacement of any person;

(a) Fair and reasonable relocation payments and assistance shall be provided to or for displaced persons in accordance with sections 202, 203, and 204 of the Uniform Act,

(b) Relocation assistance programs offering the services described in section 205 of the Uniform Act shall be provided to displaced persons, and

(c) Within a reasonable period of time prior to displacement, comparable replacement dwellings will be available to displaced persons in accordance with section 205(c)(3) of the Uniform Act.

Schedule I-5

Certificate Regarding Architectural Barriers

All facilities financed with RUS grants that are open to the public, or in which physically handicapped persons may be employed or reside, must be designed, constructed, or altered to be readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons. Standards for these facilities must comply with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151 *et seq*.), and with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), (Appendix A to 41 CFR subpart 101-19.6).

As a prospective primary participant recipient of financial assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements of the above referenced law to the effect that all facilities must be readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.

The Applicant hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

Schedule I-6

Non-Duplication of Services Certificate

As a prospective primary participant recipient of assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements that no facilities using financial assistance will duplicate adequate established telemedicine services or distance learning services.

The Applicant hereby certifies that as a prospective recipient under the said Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, that it will not use RUS grant funds to duplicate any adequate established services as referenced above.

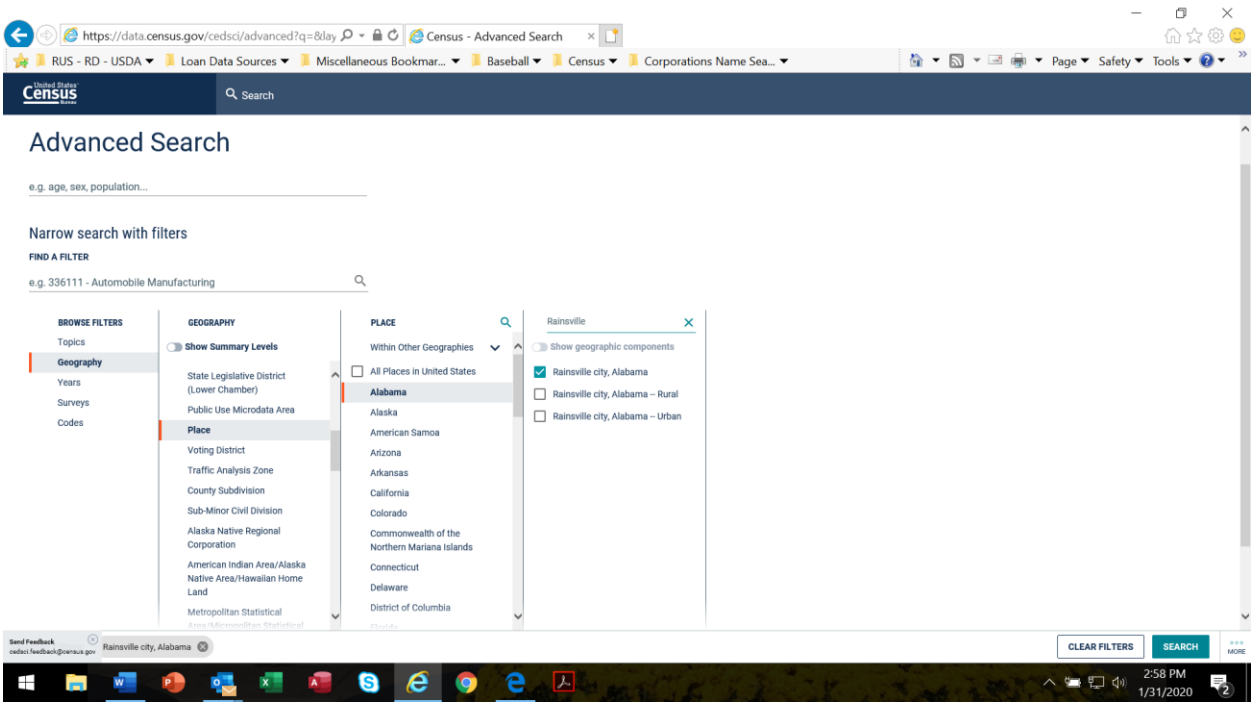
Appendix B: Finding Information on the Census Website

Finding the Population of a Town or Place Name Using the Census website

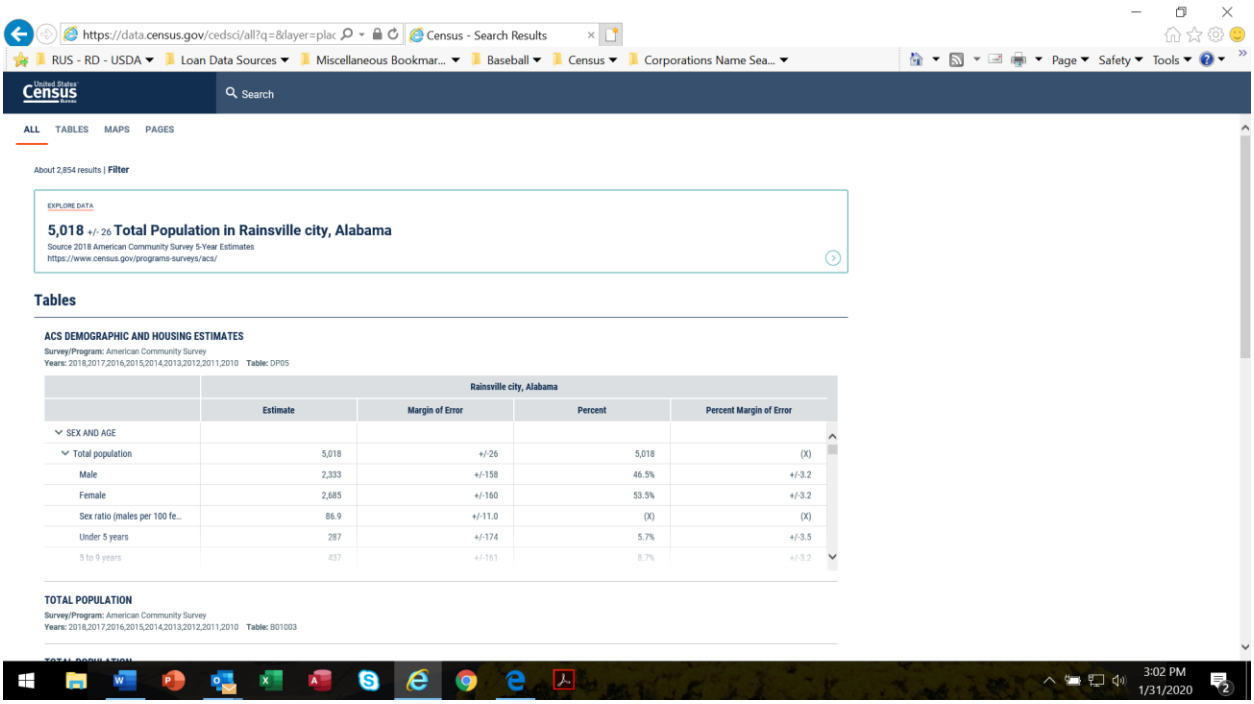
The following instructions are based on the Department of the Census website.

1. Go to the main page, https://data.census.gov/ .
2. Select Advanced Search from the initial screen. This option appears immediately under the large search box.
3. In the left navigation column labelled **BROWSE FILTERS**, click on **Geography**.
4. In the new filter column labelled **GEOGRAPHY** scroll down and click on **Place**.
5. In the new filter column labelled **PLACE** scroll down and click on the name of the state or other territory within which the desired town is located.
6. In the new filter column labelled with the name of the state click on the magnifying glass near the name of the state. This will bring up a search box. Enter into the search box the name of the desired town.
7. The area under the search box should populate with options for the town name typed. Select the most appropriate choice (usually the first one) and then click the **SEARCH** button in the lower right portion of the screen.
8. Scroll through the **Tables** presented to Table P1, the 2010 Decennial Census, and select that. After a short delay, the 2010 population should display for the chosen town.

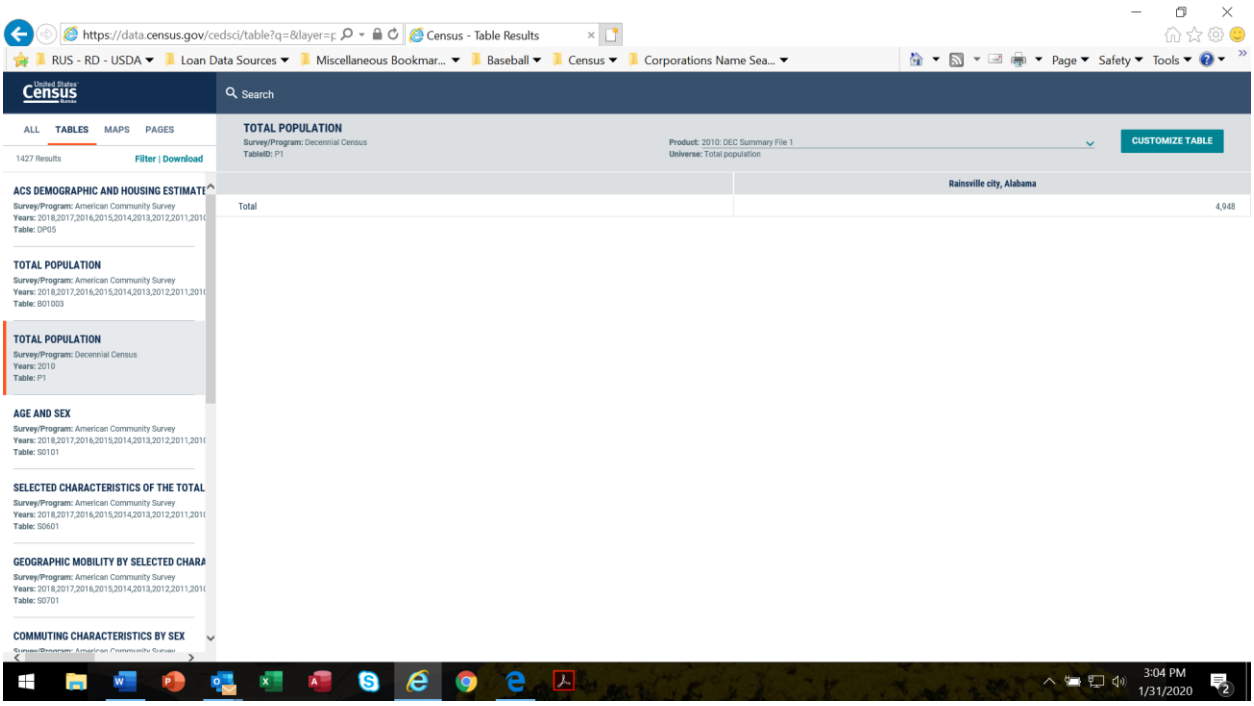
Example:



This example shows a search for Rainsville, Alabama. This is step 7, just before the Search.



This is immediately after the search. Note that the population that is first displayed (5,018) is not from the 2010 Decennial Census, and is **not** the number that should be used.



After choosing to see Tables in the upper left of the screen and then clicking on Table P1, the decennial census table from 2010, the population value that is needed appears. It is 4,948 which is considered Exceptionally Rural on the Rurality Worksheet, assigned a score of 40 points. If

the value that first displayed had been used, the population would have been inaccurately labelled as Rural, which would be assigned a value of 30 points.

If any end-user site is not within the boundaries of a town or a *place* that can found in the 2010 Census data or found in the listing of cities, towns, and places in the recent Atlas, then mark that site as "Census Rural" and assign 40 points to it. If a site is identified as Census Rural, please include a .pdf map showing the site location with the application. The map may be created from any mapping software as long as the site location can be determined in comparison to other cities, towns, roads and other features. The location of the sites must be able to be verified to confirm their associated population and rurality scores.