

# Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program

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## **Fiscal Year 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity**

**Funding Opportunity Number:** RUS-26-01-DLT

**Publication Date:** May 1, 2026

**Application Due Date:** June 30, 2026

Christopher McLean  
Acting Administrator  
Rural Utilities Service

## BASIC INFORMATION

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program

**Funding Opportunity Number:** RUS-26-01-DLT

**Announcement Type:** Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

**Assistance Listing Number:** 10.855

**Dates:** Applications must be submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and received no later than June 30, 2026 to be eligible for funding under this grant opportunity. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for funding under this grant opportunity.

**Executive Summary:**

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS, Agency), a Rural Development (RD) agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), announces the acceptance of applications under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) grant program for fiscal year (FY) 2026. These grant funds will be made to qualified types of applicants to enable and improve distance learning and telemedicine services in rural areas. All applicants are responsible for any expenses incurred in developing their applications.

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## 1.0 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 Purpose of the Program

The DLT program provides financial assistance to enable and improve distance learning and telemedicine services in rural areas. DLT grant funds support the use of telecommunications-enabled information, audio and video equipment, and related advanced technologies by students, teachers, medical professionals, and rural residents. These grants are intended to increase rural access to education, training, and health care resources that are otherwise unavailable or limited in scope.

### 1.2 Statutory and Regulatory Authority

The DLT program is authorized under 7 U.S.C. 950aaa and implemented by [7 CFR part 1734](#).

### 1.3 Definitions

The definitions applicable to this notice are published at [7 CFR 1734.3](#). Additional definitions applicable to this notice are listed below.

(a) *Federally Recognized Tribe* is classified as any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village or community as defined by the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-454). A list of Federally Recognized Tribes is available at:

[www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/01/12/2023-00504/indian-entities-recognized-by-and-eligible-to-receive-services-from-the-united-states-bureau-of](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/01/12/2023-00504/indian-entities-recognized-by-and-eligible-to-receive-services-from-the-united-states-bureau-of).

(b) *Opioid or other substance use disorder treatment* is defined as the interactive communication between medical or educational professionals and opioid users or their families, other treatment professionals or those who interact with opioid or other substance users.

(c) *Rural Area* refers to any area, as confirmed by the most recent decennial Census of the United States, which is not located within a city, town, or incorporated area that has a population of greater than 20,000 inhabitants; or an urbanized area contiguous to a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants; and which excludes certain populations pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 1991(a)(13)(H) and (I). For purposes of the definition of Rural Area, the Agency has determined to recognize any census-designated “urban area” in place of an “urbanized area,” given that the Census Bureau no longer tracks or uses the term urbanized area.

### 1.4 Application of Awards

The Agency will review, evaluate, and score applications received in response to this notice based on the provisions found in [7 CFR 1734.26](#) and as indicated in this notice. Awards under the DLT program will be made on a competitive basis using specific selection criteria contained in [7 CFR 1734.27](#). The Agency advises all interested parties that the applicant bears the full burden in preparing and submitting an application in response to this notice.

## 2.0 FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

*Type of Awards:* Grants

*Fiscal Year Funds:* FY 2026

*Available Funds:* The Agency estimates that approximately \$27 million will be available for FY 2026.

RUS may at its discretion, increase the total level of funding available under this Notice from any available source provided the awards meet the requirements of the statute which made the funding available to the Agency.

*Minimum Award Amounts:* Pursuant to [7 CFR 1734.24](#), the Administrator has established that the minimum grant amount of \$50,000.

*Maximum Award Amount:* Pursuant to [7 CFR 1734.24](#), the Administrator has established that the maximum grant amount of \$750,000 will be applied to this grant opportunity.

*Anticipated Award Date:* September 30, 2026

*Performance Period:* Three-year period, beginning the date funds are released.

*Renewal or Supplemental Awards:* Although prior DLT grants cannot be renewed, existing DLT awardees can submit applications for new projects that are distinct (clearly separate and different) from previously funded projects, either because they are for a completely separate purpose and technology or because they propose to serve a new service area, unassociated with prior funded service areas. Grant applications must be submitted during the application window.

*Type of Assistance Instrument:* Grant Agreement

*Approximate Number of Awards:* Roughly 40 awards, depending on the funding requested by selected applicants.

## 3.0 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

### 3.1 Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must meet the eligibility requirements of [7 CFR 1734.4](#).

(a) The applicant and its principals must not be debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from participation in USDA programs, in accordance with 2 CFR parts [180](#) and [417](#). The applicant must not be delinquent on any federal debt, nor have any outstanding judgment obtained by the U.S. in a Federal court. Upon receipt of an application, prior to award, and prior to disbursement of federal funds, the agency will screen the applicant and its principals through the Do Not Pay System, as required by 31 U.S.C. § 3354, to verify eligibility with respect to debarment, suspension, and any unresolved federal debts. Applicants are responsible for resolving any issues identified in the Do Not Pay System; if such issues are not resolved by the deadlines specified in this notice, the agency may proceed to award funds to other eligible applicants. Applicants are responsible for compliance with all applicable regulations, including 2 CFR Parts [180](#) and [417](#).

(b) Applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration that includes the Financial Assistance Representations and Certifications and has current information in the System

for Award Management (SAM) at: [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). Further information regarding UEI acquisition and SAM registration can be found in Section 3.3 of this document.

(c) Corporations that have been convicted of a federal felony within the past 24 months are not eligible. Any corporation that has been assessed to have any unpaid federal tax liability, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed and is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, is not eligible for financial assistance.

(d) Applicants are required to provide evidence of their ability to contract with RUS to obtain the grant and comply with all applicable requirements, in accordance with [7 CFR 1734.4\(a\)](#). It is incumbent on applicants to determine the appropriate entity to apply for the grant. Entities created by educational or medical institutions for the purpose of applying for and managing grants, such as university or hospital foundations, should not be applicants unless they can own and manage grant-funded equipment as required by the Grant Agreement and applicable regulations, including [2 CFR part 200](#). Accordingly, RUS will not transfer awards to another entity because the applicant has later determined that it cannot close the award, execute the standard Grant Agreement, which is publicly available, nor hold the grant assets in its name. Similarly, if there will be shared ownership of assets, this must be fully addressed in the application, including all related co-awardee entity information necessary to prepare legal documents. The agency will not add co-awardees to the grant agreement if the information was not clearly presented in the application.

### 3.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

The DLT program requires matching contributions for grants as outlined in [7 CFR 1734.22](#). The Application Guide located on the DLT website at [www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants](http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants) provides additional guidance for matching contributions.

(a) Match Documentation. Grant applicants must demonstrate matching contributions, in cash or in kind (new or non-depreciated items), of at least 15 percent of the grant amount requested. Matching contributions must be used for approved purposes for grants (see [7 CFR 1734.21](#) and Section 4.6 of this notice). Applications that do not provide sufficient documentation of the required 15 percent match will be deemed ineligible.

(b) Discounts and Donations. A review of applications submitted in the past 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 200.317](#) through [200.327](#), because the grant applicant did 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.

### 3.3 Other Eligibility Requirements

(a) The Application Guide provides additional information regarding eligible and ineligible items for equipment and facilities.

(b) Grant applications that are written by vendors who are mentioned in the application as vendors to be used on the project to be funded by the DLT award are ineligible as a violation of the competition rules in [2 CFR 200.319](#). Such vendors are also prohibited from bidding on the project because of conflict of interest. Additionally, applicants must fully understand the procurement requirements of [2 CFR part 200](#), subpart D and [7 CFR part 1734](#) when compiling an application for submission and must avoid the use of predetermined equipment as a violation of the bidding requirements unless they have adequately demonstrated in the application that no other equipment is available for the intended purpose.

(c) Projects located in areas covered by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) are not eligible for financial assistance from the DLT program. See [7 CFR 1734.23\(a\)\(11\)](#).

(d) If a DLT project proposes service on or over Tribal Lands and the applicant is non-Tribal, then a letter of consent is required from each Tribal Council with jurisdiction over the Tribal Lands included in the project. However, if a DLT project proposes infrastructure construction or deployment on or over Tribal Lands, then a Tribal Resolution is required from each Tribal Government with jurisdiction over the Tribal Lands included in the project.

## 4.0 APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 4.1 Address to Request Application Package

The Application Guide, copies of necessary forms, and resources are available at [www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants](http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants). Application information is also available at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If you require alternative means of communication of program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact the 711 Relay Service.

### 4.2 Content and Form of Application Submission

(a) Application Completion. Carefully review [7 CFR part 1734](#), subparts [A](#) and [B](#). A list of items for a complete application can be found at [7 CFR 1734.25](#). The Application Guide provides specific, detailed instructions for each item of a complete application. The Agency emphasizes the importance of including every item and strongly encourages applicants to follow the instructions carefully, using the examples and illustrations in the Application Guide.

(b) Description of Project Sites. Most DLT grant projects contain several project sites. The Agency provides a sample worksheet that is located on the DLT website (found here: [www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants](http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants)) to help applicants clearly identify hub, hub/end-user, and end-user sites. As in prior DLT funding

windows, site information must be consistent throughout the application. Applications without consistent site information will be returned as ineligible.

(c) Submission of Application Items. Given the high volume of program interest, applicants should submit the application items in the order as indicated in the table below. Applications that are not assembled in the specified order prevent timely determination of eligibility.

<b>Application Item</b>	<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Comments</b>
SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance Form)	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(a)</a>	Form provided through <a href="http://www.grants.gov">www.grants.gov</a>
Executive Summary of the Project	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(b)</a>	Narrative, including a publicly releasable section that describes the population served
Non-Duplication of Services	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(b)(8)</a>	Guidance provided in the Application Guide
Scoring Criteria Documentation	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(c)</a>	Provide documentation on how applicant meets each of the scoring criteria (see 7 CFR 1734.26)
Scope of Work	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(d)</a>	Narrative and documentation, including the budget
Financial Information and Sustainability	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(e)</a>	Narrative
Statement of Experience	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(f)</a>	Narrative
Funding Commitments from All Sources	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(g)</a>	Worksheet and match documentation letters with authorized signatures
Telecommunications System Plan	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(h)</a>	Documentation
Compliance with other Federal Statutes	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(i)</a>	Addressed by providing Financial Assistance Representations and Certifications in <a href="http://www.SAM.gov">www.SAM.gov</a>
Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(i)</a>	Addressed by providing Financial Assistance Representations and Certifications in <a href="http://sam.gov/content/home">sam.gov/content/home</a>
Environmental Review Requirements	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(j)</a>	Guidance provided in the Application Guide
Evidence of Legal Authority and Existence	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(k)</a>	Guidance provided in the Application Guide
Federal Debt Certification	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(l)</a>	SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
Consultation with USDA State Director	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(m)</a>	Documentation

Supplemental Information	<a href="#">7 CFR 1734.25(n)</a>	Documentation
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#### 4.3 Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management and

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

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

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

(d) Each applicant must provide a valid UEI in its application, unless determined exempt [under 2 CFR 25.110](#).

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

#### 4.4 Submission Dates and Times

(a) Application Technical Assistance. Prior to official submission of applications, applicants may request technical assistance or other application guidance from the Agency, if such requests are made not less than 15 days prior to the application deadline. Agency contact information can be found in the For Further Information Contact section of this notice.

(b) Application Deadline Date. Applications must be submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and received no later than June 30, 2026 to be eligible for funding under this grant opportunity.

(c) Applications Received After Deadline Date. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for funding under this grant opportunity.

The Agency will not solicit or consider new scoring or eligibility information that is submitted after the application deadline. RUS also reserves the right to ask applicants for clarifying information and additional verification of assertions in the application.

#### 4.5 Intergovernmental Review

Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, applies to this program. This E.O. requires that federal agencies provide opportunities for consultation on proposed assistance

with State and local governments. Applicants should use the USDA Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), Intergovernmental Review website ([www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/intergovernmental-review](http://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/intergovernmental-review)) instructions to contact the State Points of Contact (SPOC). Any comments obtained through the SPOC must be provided as part of the application process. Applications from federally recognized Indian Tribes are not subject to this requirement.

#### 4.6 Funding Restrictions

(a) Ineligible grant purposes are outlined in [7 CFR 1734.23](#). Applicants should exclude ineligible items and ineligible matching contributions from the budget. If an ineligible item or matching contribution is included in the budget, the item will be removed and may result in an application being deemed ineligible. See the Application Guide for more details on funding restrictions, matching contributions, a recommended budget format, and detailed budget compilation instructions.

If an application includes both eligible and ineligible grant purposes on a single line of the application budget, and the cost of the ineligible item can be determined, the ineligible item will be removed from the approved budget. However, the entire line item will be deemed ineligible if the cost of the ineligible item cannot be determined.

(b) Hub sites located in non-rural areas are not eligible for grant assistance unless they are necessary to provide DLT services to rural residents at end user sites. See [7 CFR 1734.2\(h\)](#).

(c) For the purposes of this NOFO, the cost of video conferencing platform licenses is considered an eligible cost if:

(1) The video conferencing platform is an integral component in a project delivering distance learning or telemedicine services to an end user through the use of eligible equipment;

(2) The cost does not exceed ten percent of the grant amount;

(3) The application demonstrates that the predominant use (50 percent or more) of the video conferencing platform will be for the distance learning or telemedicine project;

(4) The license is new and not a renewal of an existing license; and

(5) The number of licenses requested does not exceed the number of end-user devices requested in the application.

(6) The duration of funding for video conferencing platform licenses is limited to three years from the date funds are made available.

(d) If an application includes multiple costs on a single line of the application budget, one of which is subject to a cost limitation, as outlined in [7 CFR 1734.21](#), the items that are not subject to the cost limitation will be deducted when calculating the cost limitation percentage. However, the entire line item will be applied against the cost limitation if each cost cannot be determined.

(e) Grantees may not subaward any part of a DLT grant without the express, prior written approval of RUS.

## 4.7 Other Submission Requirements

- (a) Applications will not be accepted via paper, fax or electronic mail.
- (b) Submit the electronic application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Do not send a paper copy to RUS. To increase the range of applicants that will be successful in FY 2026, only ONE application per applicant is eligible for approval.
- (c) For duplicate applications submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the Agency will base its evaluation on the last copy of the application submitted. If an applicant submits multiple applications for different projects, then the Agency will only consider the application with the highest score.
- (d) Grants.gov requires some credentialing and online authentication procedures. These procedures may take several business days to complete. Therefore, the applicant should complete the registration, credentialing, and authorization procedures at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) before submitting an application. Instructions on all required passwords, credentialing, and software are available on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If system errors or technical difficulties occur, use the customer support resources available at the Grants.gov website.

## 5.0 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### 5.1 Criteria

Grant applications are scored competitively and are subject to the criteria provided in [7 CFR 1734.26](http://www.ecfr.gov/title49/chapterI/part1734/subpart26) and this notice, and further guidance on these criteria is provided in the Application Guide.

- (a) Rurality Category (up to 40 points). The rurality score is based on two factors:
  - (1) The population size of each community where an end-user site is located, and
  - (2) Whether an end-user site lies within an urbanized area adjacent to a city or town having a population more than 50,000 inhabitants.

For non-fixed site projects and projects which contain non-fixed components, the rurality score will be based on the hub site.

Applicants should use 2020 census data from the census website ([www.data.census.gov/cedsci](http://www.data.census.gov/cedsci)) as their source for population data. To determine if a site lies in any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants or an urbanized area contiguous to a city or town having a population in excess of 50,000 inhabitants, applicants should check the site address, using the DLT mapping tool available at [www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants](http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants). The Application Guide provides additional guidance for this category, including a worksheet to assist applicants in the calculation of their rurality scores.

- (b) Economic Need Category (up to 30 points). Economic need is based on the county poverty percentage of the end-user sites proposed in the application. The percentages must be determined by utilizing the United States Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program. Applicants

can use the spreadsheet posted to the [DLT program website](#) to look up current SAIPE county-level data. End-user sites located in geographic areas, for which no SAIPE data exist, will be determined to have an average SAIPE poverty percentage of 30 percent. Such geographic areas may include territories of the United States or other locations eligible for funding through the DLT program.

(c) Service Needs and Benefits Category (up to 30 points). This category measures the extent to which the proposed project meets the need for distance learning or telemedicine services in Rural Areas, the benefits derived from the proposed services, and the local community involvement in the planning, implementation, and financial assistance of the project. RUS will also consider the extent to which the applicant's documentation identifies the local economic, education, or health care challenges. The applicant must explain how the project proposes to address these issues and why the applicant cannot complete the project without a grant.

## 5.2 Review and Selection Process

Grant applications are ranked by the final score. RUS selects applications based on those rankings, subject to the availability of funds. As noted in Section [4.7](#) of this announcement, RUS will approve no more than one application per applicant. If an applicant submits more than one application for different projects, then the Agency will only consider the application with the highest score. If an applicant submits more than one application for the same project, then the Agency will only consider the latest submission. In addition, the Agency has the authority to limit the number of applications selected in any one state or for any one project during a fiscal year. See [7 CFR 1734.27](#) for a description of the grant application selection process. An application receiving fewer points can be selected over a higher scoring application if there are insufficient funds available to cover the costs of the higher scoring application, as stated in [7 CFR 1734.27\(b\)\(3\)](#).

The Agency evaluates grant applications in accordance with [7 CFR 1734.27\(c\)](#). The Agency reserves the right to offer the applicant less than the grant funding requested.

## 6.0 FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### 6.1 Federal Award Notices

The Agency notifies applicants whose projects are selected for awards by mailing or emailing a copy of an award letter. The receipt of an award letter does not authorize the applicant to commence performance under the award. After sending the award letter, the Agency will send an agreement that contains all the terms and conditions for the grant. An applicant must execute and return the grant agreement, accompanied by any additional items required by the agreement, within the number of days specified in the selection notice letter. The standard agreement is available on the [www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants](http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants).

### 6.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The items listed in [7 CFR part 1734](#), this announcement, the Application Guide, and program resources implement the appropriate administrative and national policy requirements, which include but are not limited to:

- (a) Executing a DLT Grant Agreement.
- (b) Using Form SF 270, Request for Advance or Reimbursement, to request reimbursements (along with the submission of receipts for expenditures and any other documentation to support the request for reimbursement).
- (c) Submitting an annual Project Performance Activity Report, no later than January 31st of the year following the year in which all or any portion of the grant is first advanced and continuing in subsequent years until completion of the project.
- (d) Ensuring that records are maintained to document all activities and expenditures utilizing DLT grant funds and matching funds (receipts for expenditures are to be included in this documentation).
- (e) Providing a final project performance report, no later than one hundred twenty (120) days after the expiration date, termination of the grant, the project completion, or the final disbursement of the grant by the grantee, whichever event occurs last.
- (f) Complying with policies, guidance, and requirements as described in the following applicable Code of Federal Regulations, and any successor regulations:
  - (1) 2 CFR parts [200](#) and [400](#) (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards).
  - (2) USDA General Terms and Conditions, which can be found at <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/general-information/staff-offices/office-chief-financial-officer/federal-financial-assistance-policy/usda-general-terms-and-conditions>.
  - (3) 2 CFR parts [417](#) and [180](#) (Government-wide Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension).
- (g) Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA). With respect to any construction under the DLT project, Awardees that are Non-Federal Entities, defined pursuant to 2 CFR 200.1 as any State, local government, Indian tribe, Institution of Higher Education, or nonprofit organization, shall be governed by the requirements of Section 70914 of the Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA) within the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58), and its implementing regulations at [2 CFR part 184](#). Any requests for waiver of these requirements must be submitted pursuant to USDA's guidance available online at [www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver](http://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver).
- (h) Geospatial Data. Awardee, and any and all contracts entered into by the Awardee with respect to the Award, shall ensure that geospatial data required to be collected and provided to the agency, conforms with the requirements of USDA Department Regulation DR-3465-001 and the Geospatial Metadata Standards set forth in DM 3465-001, which can be obtained online at [www.usda.gov/directives/dr-3465-001](http://www.usda.gov/directives/dr-3465-001) and [www.usda.gov/directives/dm-3465-001](http://www.usda.gov/directives/dm-3465-001).

### 6.3 Reporting

(a) Performance Reporting. All recipients of DLT financial assistance must provide annual performance activity reports to RUS until the project is complete and the funds are expended. A final performance report is also required; the final report may serve as the last annual report. The final report must include an evaluation of the success of the project in meeting the DLT program objectives. See [7 CFR 1734.7](#) for additional information on these reporting requirements.

(b) Annual Audit. All recipients of DLT financial assistance must provide an annual audit as follows:

(1) Non-Federal Entities, which include recipients that are states, local governments, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, or nonprofit organizations, shall provide RUS with an audit pursuant to [2 CFR part 200, subpart F](#) (Audit Requirements). The recipient must follow subsection [2 CFR 200.502](#) in determining federal awards expended. In addition, the recipient must include the value of new federal loans made along with any grant expenditures from all federal sources during the recipient's fiscal year. Therefore, the audit submission requirement for this program begins in the recipient's fiscal year that the recipient meets or exceeds the threshold for Federal expenditures in accordance with [2 CFR 200.501](#). All required audits must be submitted within the earlier of: (i) 30 calendar days after receipt of the auditor's report; or (ii) nine months after the end of the recipient's audit period.

(2) For all other entities, recipients shall provide RUS with an audit within 120 days after the as of audit date in accordance with [7 CFR part 1773](#). With respect to grant funds, the audit is required until all grant funds have been expended or rescinded. While an audit is required, recipients must also submit reports on internal control; compliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements; and instances of fraud.

(c) Recipient and Sub-recipient Reporting. The applicant must have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements for first-tier sub-awards, if approved by the agency, and executive compensation under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 in the event the applicant receives funding unless such applicant is exempt from such reporting requirements pursuant to [2 CFR 170.105](#). The reporting requirements under the Transparency Act pursuant to 2 CFR part 170 are as follows:

(1) If approved by the agency, first Tier Sub-Awards of \$30,000 or more (unless they are exempt under 2 CFR part 170) must be reported by the recipient to [www.fsrs.gov](http://www.fsrs.gov) no later than the end of the month following the month the sub-award was made. Please note that currently underway is a consolidation of eight federal procurement systems, including the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS), into one system, SAM. As a result, the FSRS will soon be consolidated into and accessed through [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

(2) The total compensation of the recipient's executives (the five most highly compensated executives) must be reported by the recipient (if the recipient meets the criteria under [2 CFR part 170](#)) to [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) by the end of the month following the month in which the award was made.

(3) If sub-awards are approved by the agency, the total compensation of the sub-recipient's executives (the five most highly compensated executives) must be reported by the sub-recipient (if the

sub-recipient meets the criteria under [2 CFR part 170](#)) to the recipient by the end of the month following the month in which the sub-award was made.

(d) Record Keeping and Accounting. The agreement will contain provisions related to record keeping and accounting requirements.

## 7.0 FEDERAL AWARD AGENCY CONTACTS

For inquiries regarding eligibility concerns, please contact program staff at [www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us](http://www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us). Other inquiries, please contact Shekinah Pepper, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, Loan Origination and Approval Division, RUS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 1590, Room 4121-S, Washington, D.C. 20250-1590, telephone: (202) 720-0800, email: [shekinah.pepper@usda.gov](mailto:shekinah.pepper@usda.gov).

## 8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

### 8.1 Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the information collection requirements associated with the programs, as covered in this notice, have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0572-0096.

### 8.2 National Environmental Policy Act

All recipients under this notice are subject to the requirements of [7 CFR part 1b](#).

### 8.3 Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act

All applicants, in accordance with [2 CFR part 25](#), must be registered in SAM and have a UEI number as stated in Section 4.3 of this notice. All recipients of Federal financial assistance are required to report information about first-tier sub-awards and executive total compensation in accordance with [2 CFR part 170](#).

### 8.4 Civil Rights Act

All awards of Federal financial assistance made under this NOFO are subject to applicable civil rights laws, which may include Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1973, and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974.

### 8.5 Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations

(a) Faith-based organizations may apply for this award on the same basis as any other organization, as set forth at, and subject to the protections and requirements of, this part and any applicable constitutional and statutory requirements, including 42 U.S.C. 2000bb et seq. USDA will not, in the selection of recipients, discriminate for or against an organization on the basis of the organization's

religious character, motives, or affiliation, or lack thereof, or on the basis of conduct that would not be considered grounds to favor or disfavor a similarly situated secular organization.

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

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

## 8.6 Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/general-information/staff-offices/office-assistant-secretary-civil-rights/how-file-program-discrimination-complaint> and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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

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

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