

**Rural Energy for America Program  
Technical Assistance Grant (REAP TAG)  
Frequently Asked Questions  
Maine**

**We've been following the REAP program for years. What is new?**

This is the second time REAP [Technical Assistance Grants](http://tinyurl.com/ycmcatyv) (REAP TAG) have been offered (<http://tinyurl.com/ycmcatyv>). The purpose of the REAP TAG Program is to enable applicants to provide technical assistance to agricultural producers and rural small businesses applying for REAP, with priority for applications assisting at least two or more of the following types of REAP applicants:

1. Agricultural producers
2. REAP applicants pursuing projects located in disadvantaged or distressed communities
3. Tribal entities
4. REAP applicants pursuing projects using Underutilized Technologies
5. REAP applicants pursuing projects under \$20,000

**If I'm interested in applying for TAG funding, where should I begin?**

Begin by reviewing the information in the [Federal Register :: Notice of Funding Opportunity for Rural Energy for America Program Technical Assistance Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2024](#). This document is often called simply the "NOFO," and you should read it carefully before deciding whether to apply and during the application process.

**The NOFO contains some unfamiliar language. Where can I find definitions?**

Please refer to [eCFR :: 7 CFR Part 4280 -- Loans and Grants](#).

**How much time do we have to take advantage of this new program, and will it be offered again?**

The deadline to apply for the current REAP TAG round is March 15th, 2024, by 11:59 p.m. Applications must be submitted via grants.gov or by email. (Paper applications will not be accepted.) We anticipate that there may be future opportunities to apply.

**Does this program impact the deadline for regular REAP grant applications?**

No. REAP applications are due by 4:30 p.m. April 1<sup>st</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup>, and Sept 30, 2024.

**What are the maximum and minimum grant amounts, and how long will awardees have to utilize the funds?**

For FY24 \$250,000 has been allocated for Maine. The minimum award allowed is \$100,000. REAP TAG funds must be utilized within 3 years. Ideally, we will make

awards for several different types of technical assistance. It is not possible to request an extension beyond three years.

**What is meant by an “underutilized technology”?**

Underutilized technology and underutilized renewable energy technology is defined as “those technologies which make up less than 20 percent of the total grant dollars obligated at the end of the fiscal year, two years before the current year.”

**Is TAG funding only available to advise potential REAP applicants about renewable energy system installations?**

No. Energy assessments and efficiency upgrades are examples of other services that may be eligible. Refer to the NOFO for more information.

**When planning our proposal, how do we know if a particular address or community is considered rural?**

Almost all of Maine is classified as “rural” except for Portland and areas immediately surrounding Portland. (Note that ineligible areas are slightly different for FY24 due to the implementation of the 2020 Census.) You can check the eligible areas map here:

[Eligibility \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/eligibility)

**If my organization puts together a proposal, do we have to spell out exactly what entities will receive our services if we are awarded TAG funds?**

No, you do not need to specify the recipients in advance. However, you do need to clearly define the recruitment plan you will use. (Read the NOFO for more details.) Although you do not have to designate your applicants in advance, you must have a plan in place to ensure you meet established priorities such as serving an underserved community and facilitating installation of underutilized technology.

**If my organization is awarded a REAP TAG, how will we access the funds?**

The funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis. Keep records of the eligible services your business provides, including the entities you worked with, the date(s), their location, hours spent on the TA, mileage for any site visit(s), and what you provided for TA. Be prepared to provide a copy of this information and documentation of the work completed.

**Is it possible to get an advance on TAG funds (before providing services), or are they only available by reimbursement?**

The funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis only.

**What happens if we are awarded a grant and cannot use all the funds in three years?**

It is not possible to receive an extension. Any unused funds will revert to the U.S. Treasury and will no longer be available to the awardee or the program. Although there

is no penalty for not using all your grant, returning funds potentially impacts future funding for the program. Please budget carefully and request an amount that you expect to be able to use in the three-year timeframe.

### **How do we formally submit our completed application?**

Please notify Katrina Shaw, USDA Rural Development Maine State Energy Coordinator (email [katrina.shaw@usda.gov](mailto:katrina.shaw@usda.gov) or call her at 207-990-9129) that you intend to apply. To submit your application, you may:

- Email the application to the State Energy Coordinator, Katrina Shaw by 11:59 p.m. on March 15, 2024, or
- Apply online through <https://www.Grants.gov> by 11:59 pm on March 15, 2024.

Any applications received after these times will not be reviewed or considered for funding.

### **My company works in multiple states. Must I apply in each state?**

Applying in multiple states is not allowed per the NOFO. (See section C.3.)

### **Can we provide TA to entities that are not eligible for REAP, such as schools, non-profits, municipalities, or businesses not in rural areas?**

No. Funding must be targeted to eligible agricultural producers and/or rural small businesses. Assisting schools, nonprofits, urban businesses, etc. would not be eligible activities.

### **Can we include administrative costs in our REAP TAG proposal?**

Up to 5% of the grant award can be used for indirect costs regardless of existing negotiated indirect cost rates. The balance of a proposed budget must be for costs that are directly related to technical assistance.

### **When will my organization find out if we will receive a REAP TAG?**

We will begin scoring applications once they are deemed complete. The timeline for awards will depend upon how many applications are received. We anticipate that awards will be made before June 30, 2024.

### **My company has never received a grant like this, and we are nervous about the compliance requirements if we are awarded. Is there any help available to navigate this?**

Yes. Our office will provide a voluntary training session to successful applicants to explain program specifics, the reimbursement process, reporting requirements, etc. shortly after the awards are announced.

**How can businesses find out who has received TAG awards to request free technical assistance?**

Once the awards are finalized, we will share the list of recipients with the media, on our website, and with our REAP mailing list. To subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit the [GovDelivery subscriber page](#). With this or any other questions, you may also contact:

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