**USDA**

 **United States Department of Agriculture**

**Rural Development, Community Facilities**

# Application Guide

for

## Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grants

### Fiscal Year 2021

# Table of Contents

# Section 1: The Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program

## 1.1    Introduction

The Agency encourages applications that will support recommendations made in the Rural Prosperity Task Force report to help improve life in rural America (www.usda.gov/ruralprosperity).  Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that provide measurable results in helping rural communities build robust and sustainable economies through strategic investments in infrastructure, partnerships, and innovation.

Key strategies include:
- Achieving e-Connectivity for Rural America
- Developing the Rural Economy
- Harnessing Technological Innovation
- Supporting a Rural Workforce
- Improving Quality of Life

To combat a key threat to economic prosperity, rural workforce and quality of life, the Agency also encourages applications that will support the Administration's goal to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with Substance Use Disorder (including opioid misuse) in high-risk rural communities by strengthening the capacity to address prevention, treatment and/or recovery at the community, county, state, and/or regional levels.  See https://www.cdc.gov/pwid/vulnerable-counties-data.html.  Key strategies include:
- Prevention:  reducing the occurrence of Substance Use Disorder (including opioid misuse) and fatal substance-related overdoses through community and provider education and harm reduction measures, such as the strategic placement of overdose reversing devices;
- Treatment:  implementing or expanding access to evidence-based treatment practices for Substance Use Disorder (including opioid misuse), such as medication-assisted treatment (MAT); and
- Recovery:  expanding peer recovery and treatment options that help people start and stay in recovery.

State Director and Administrator discretionary points will be awarded to applications that address these Agency Goals.

The Agency will make grants to public bodies, Indian tribes, and private, nonprofit corporations, (such as States, counties, cities, townships, and incorporated towns and villages, boroughs, authorities, districts, and Indian tribes) to provide associations technical assistance and/or training with respect to essential community facilities programs.  The technical assistance and/or training will assist communities, Indian Tribes, and Nonprofit Corporations to identify and plan for community facility needs that exist in their area.  Once those needs have been identified, the Grantee can assist in identifying public and private resources to finance those identified community facility needs

There are two types of applicants. The applicant must be either a **Technical Assistance Provider (TAP)** or an **Ultimate Recipient (UR)**. A TAP will provide technical assistance to an UR. An UR can apply for planning assistance for a specific project.

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

- Assess your eligibility for grant assistance
- Understand how and when to apply
- Create a successful application

## 1.2     Authorization

Congress authorized the Community Facilities (CF) Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant Program in Title VI, Section 6006 of the Agricultural Act of 2014. Program regulations can be found at 7 CFR part 3570, subpart F. Should any differences result in the interpretation of these guidelines and 7 CFR 3570, subpart F. **The regulation will take precedence over information contained in this guide.**

A funding notice for the CF TAT Grant for Fiscal Year 2021 was published in the Federal Register Vol. 86, No. 6 on January 11, 2021.

## 1.3     Available funding for FY 2021

The amount available for Fiscal Year 2021 will be determined when the budget is approved by Congress and will be announced at that time. You may visit https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-technical-assistance-and-training-grant for the most up to date information.

Grants will be made in amounts based upon the availability of grant funds, but no grant and will exceed $150,000.  Grant awards made to Ultimate Recipients will not exceed $50,000.  The Agency reserves the right to reduce funding amounts based on the Agency's determination of available funding or other Agency funding priorities.

Up to 10% of the available funds may be awarded to the highest scoring Ultimate Recipient(s) as long as they score a minimum score of at least 70.

## 1.4    TAT Program Contacts

Agency staff will administer the TAT Program. We encourage you to contact the CF staff early in the application process with any questions or ideas concerning your proposal. Please locate the contact for your State at: www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices.

Applicants may request technical assistance or other application guidance from the Agency, as long as such requests are made prior to March 17, 2021.

## 1.5     TAT Resources on the Web

Visit our website: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-technical-assistance-and-training-grant.

# Section 2: General Considerations for a TAT Grant

## 2.1    Eligible Organizations

A. There are two types of applicants for the TAT program. All applicants for a TAT grant

must comply with, all applicable Federal laws and Executive Order requirements including, but not limited to:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.
- Executive Order 12549 Debarment and Suspension and 2 CFR parts 180 and 417.
- Section 319 of Public Law 101-121 on Lobbying.
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975.
- Fair Housing Act of 1968.
- Executive Order 11246 Equal Employment Opportunity.
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
- 2 CFR parts 200 and 400 "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

B. **State laws, local laws, regulatory commission regulations:** Applicants must comply with all applicable state and local laws and regulatory commission regulations. **If there are conflicts between this subpart and State or local laws or regulations, the provisions of this subpart will control.**

C. **All Applicants Must:**
- Be a public body or a private, nonprofit corporation, (such as States, counties, cities, townships, and incorporated towns and villages, boroughs, authorities, districts, and Indian tribes);
- Be legally established and located within one of the following:
  (i)    A State as defined § 3570.252; or
  (ii)   The District of Columbia; and
- Have the proven ability, background, experience (as evidenced by the organization's satisfactory completion of Project(s) similar to those proposed), legal authority and actual capacity to provide technical assistance and/or training to UR as provided in § 3570.252. To meet the requirement of actual capacity, an Applicant must either:
  (i)    Have the necessary resources to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations in Rural Areas through its staff,
  (ii)   Be assisted by an affiliate or member organization which has such background and experience and which agrees, in writing, that it will provide the technical assistance, or
  (iii)  May contract with a nonaffiliated organization for not more than 49 percent of the awarded grant to provide the proposed technical assistance.

D. **Applicants applying as TAP must:**
- Be designated tax exempt by the Internal Revenue Service.

E. **Applicants applying as UR must:**
- Be a public body, or
- Be a Federal or State recognized Indian Tribe (Tribes do NOT have to be located on a Federal or State recognized Indian Reservation to be eligible), or
- A nonprofit corporation that demonstrates community ties to the local area

## 2.2    Eligible Grant Purposes

Grant funds and any matching funds may be used by TAP to:

- Assist communities in identifying and planning for community facility needs *such as a community survey*
- Identify resources to finance community facility needs from public and private sources *such as USDA and other Federal Agencies, State Agencies, Foundations, and commercial credit*
- Prepare reports and surveys necessary to request financial assistance to develop community facilities *such as preliminary architectural reports and financial feasibility reports*
- Prepare applications for Agency financial assistance
- Improve the management, including financial management, related to the operation of community facilities
- Assist with other areas of need identified by the Secretary

**UR may only use grant funds and any matching funds to prepare reports and surveys necessary to request financial assistance to develop community facilities.**

## 2.3    Ineligible Grant Purposes

Ineligible purposes for grant funds and any matching funds include, but are not limited to:

- Duplicate services, such as those previously performed by an association's consultant in developing a Project, including feasibility, design, Professional Services, and cost estimates prior to receiving the grant award. **Any project budget that includes salaries as a proposed expense that does not result in an overall percentage increase of staff would be considered a duplication of services.**
- Purchase real estate or vehicles, improve or renovate office space, or repair and maintain privately owned property.
- Pay the costs for construction, improvement, rehabilitation, modification, or operation and maintenance of an Essential Community Facility.
- Procure applications for the Agency's community facilities or other loan or grant program.  Grant funds cannot be used to generate new applications; however, as stated in § 3570.262(c)(4) funds can be used to assist with application preparation for Agency programs. The intent of the TAT grant is for TAP to assist UR with existing technical assistance needs. Recruiting new projects and marketing is not an eligible grant purpose.
- Pay for other costs that are not allowed under 2 CFR part 200.
- Pay an outstanding judgment obtained by the U.S. in a Federal Court (other than in the United States Tax Court), which has been recorded.  An Applicant will be ineligible to receive a grant until the judgment is paid in full or otherwise satisfied.
- Intervene in Federal or adjudicatory proceedings.
- Fund political or lobbying activities.
- Conduct an income survey associated with developing a complete application for a potential Applicant.
- Pay for indirect costs in excess of 10% of the amount of grant. Examples of indirect costs include overhead expenses (for example, pro-rated rent and utilities) and general and administrative expenses (for example, officers' salaries, accounting department costs and personnel department costs).
- Provide assistance to a UR, or a Project, that is not located in a Rural Area.
- Pay for expenses incurred more than three years after the date of the grant agreement.

The grant agreement cannot be extended beyond this date.
- Provide assistance to a Project that primarily serves an area that is not considered Low Income.
- Fund a project where a Conflict of Interest exists.
  Example: *A board member for a UR has a relative who is an architect. The relative could not be selected for preparation of a preliminary architectural report.*

# Section 3: Application Submission Process

## 3.1    SAM and DUNS Number Requirement

You will need to register with the System for Award Management (SAM). You will need a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS). To verify that your organization has a DUNS number or to receive one at no cost, call the dedicated toll-free request line at 1.866.705.5711 or go to www.dnb.com.  You are required to provide your DUNS number during the registration process. **The SAM registration processes may take several business days to complete. It is best to start this process as soon as possible.**  SAM registers your organization and stores your information for Federal Awards and is required for all recipients. You may register online at https://www.sam.gov.    A user guide is included in Appendix C.

## 3.2    Application Submissions

You may file an application in either electronic or paper format. All applications must be received by the deadlines listed in Sections 3.5. **Applications will not be accepted by fax or email. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline.  <u>An applicant may submit only one application.</u>**

## 3.3    Electronic Applications

Electronic applications must be filed online at www.grants.gov. You must be registered with www.grants.gov before you can submit an electronic grant application.  For more information using this system visit https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html

## 3.4    Paper Applications

Paper copies of the application must be submitted to the state office in the state where the applicant is headquartered. The address and contact information for each state's USDA Rural Development Office can be accessed at www.rd.usda.gov/contact- us/state-offices.

For applicants whose headquarters are in the District of Columbia, paper applications may be submitted to the National Office in care of Shirley Stevenson, 1400 SW Independence Ave, S.W., STOP 0787, Room 0175S, Washington, DC, 20250.

**Note: Packages arriving at USDA via the USPS are irradiated, which can damage the contents and may delay delivery of your application.** You are encouraged to consider the impact of this procedure in selecting your application delivery method.

## 3.5     Deadline for Grant Application

All paper applications must be received by 4:00 pm local time on March 29, 2021. Electronic applications will be accepted through www.grants.gov until midnight (ET) on March 22, 2021.

**Applications received after the due date will NOT be considered.**

You are encouraged to begin work on your application early and plan for submittal prior to the deadline to ensure your application is received by the deadline. Only complete applications, received prior to the deadline will be considered. Exceptions to the above deadline will not be granted for any reason including technical problems, missing forms, or problems with websites such as www.grants.gov.

# Section 4: Application Requirements

To be considered a complete application, you must submit a complete application by the deadline date. A complete application for TAT funds must include the following:

1. Required Forms – Applicants must complete and submit the following forms. The following forms are available at www.grants.gov or by contacting your state office.
   A. Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance – Non-construction"
   B. Standard Form 424A, "Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs"
   C. Standard Form 424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs"
   D. Form AD 1047, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transaction"
   E. Form AD 1049, "Certification Regarding Drug-free Workplace Requirements"
   F. Form AD 1048, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – Lower Tier Covered Transactions"
   G. Form RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement"
   H. Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement" (Under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964)
   I. Form 1940 Q, Exhibit A-1, "Certification for Contracts, Grants, and Loans" (include only if grant exceeds $100,000)
   J. Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activity" (only applicable if lobbying activities disclosed on Exhibit A-1)
   K. Form AD 3030, "Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants"
   L. Form AD 3031, "Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants"

2. Legal Status –
   a. Public Bodies: must provide evidence the entity is legally formed under applicable statutes. The Clerk or other authorized official may self-certify the legality of the public body by providing a signed statement.

   > Example: *I, _____, as _____ of the _____, certify that _____ was legally formed on _____ under state law _____.*

   b. Nonprofits: corporations must submit certified copies of their current organizational documents, including Articles or Certificate of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Certificate of Good Standing. A list of current board members and

officers should also be provided. The Board Secretary or other authorized individual may self-certify the validity and completeness of the organizational documents by signing a statement.

Example: *I, _____, as _____ of the _____, certify that validity and completeness of the organizational documents by signing this statement.*

1.  Tribes: Federally recognized tribes must document that the tribe is included in the current Federal Register list of tribal entities recognized and eligible for funding and services, that was published on January 30, 2018 The list is available at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-30/pdf/2018-01907.pdf.
    Additionally, six tribes in Virginia received federal recognition after this list was published.  For these six tribes, statutory citations and additional documentation will suffice.

3.  Statement of Compliance – Applicants must self-certify that they will operate in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

    Example: *This is to certify the _____ is in compliance with Title VI o the Civil Rights Act of 1964.*

4.  Project Narrative – You must provide a narrative detailing your experience in providing the proposed service. The narrative should provide a brief description of your successes in completing projects of a similar nature. The discussion should include documenting the needs identified and the objectives accomplished.  A narrative of your experience in providing services similar to those proposed.  The narrative will provide a brief description of successfully completed Projects including the need that was identified and objectives accomplished.

5.  Financial Information – Latest financial information to show the Applicant's financial capacity to carry out proposed work.  A current Audit is preferred; however, Applicants may submit a balance sheet and an income Statement in lieu of an Audit report.

6.  Matching Funds – Documentation of any cash matching funds to be used for the project. The source(s) and amount(s) of funds should be provided. Please note, matching funds are NOT required for an application.

7.  Services Provided – A list detailing proposed services to be provided with grant funds.

8.  Known Relationships – Identify and report any association or relationship with Rural Development employees.  Relationships with employees does not exclude you from participation but they must be disclosed.

    Example: *"There is no known relationship or association with a Rural Development employee. This includes family members, known close relatives, business associates or known close personal associates."*
    *or*
    *"There is a known relationship or association with a Rural Development employee.  These known relationships or associations are listed below."*

9.  Grantee Selection Criteria – TAP who have not identified the UR, must provide a narrative explaining how they will select UR to be assisted with grant funds.
    Example: *"The applicant will only select rural communities with population less than 5,000 and MHI less than 24,600."*

10. Project Costs – An estimated breakdown of costs (direct and indirect) that includes the proposed grant amount, matching funds, and any other source of funding in the project.

This should be a line-item budget, by category. Categories such as salaries, administrative, other, and indirect costs that pertain to the proposed project must be clearly defined. Supporting documentation listing the components of these categories must be included.

11. <u>Indirect Costs</u> – The indirect cost category in the project budget should be used only when a grant applicant has a federally negotiated indirect cost rate. A copy of the current rate agreement must be provided with the application. In no case can the indirect cost exceed 10% of modified total grant. For questions on this requirement, contact your State Office.

12. <u>Financial Management System</u> – Self-certify to the agency the existing or proposed financial management system that will be used to track project costs.

    Example: *We have established acceptable financial records which includes a chart of accounts, general ledger, check register, receipts journal, billings journal, and an accounts receivable ledger. We have been advised that we must maintain accounting records in such a manner that will allow the operations of facility to be reported separately.*

13. <u>Scoring Information</u> – Other relevant documents relating to scoring criteria including, but not limited to:
    a. <u>UR Identification</u> – If the TAP has identified a list of UR to be served and the county, State or States where assistance will be provided. Identify UR by name, and other characteristics such as size, income, location, and provide MHI and population data.
    b. <u>Type of Assistance/Training</u> – Description of type of technical assistance and/or training to be provided and the tasks to be contracted. This should outline the project in sufficient detail to provide the reader with a complete understanding of how the proposed project will work.
    c. <u>Project Evaluation</u> – Description of how the applicant will evaluate the project. Clearly state the goals and how they tie to the need as defined in the work plan, and the method proposed to measure results.
    d. <u>Project Need Documentation</u> – Documentation of the need for the proposed service. Clearly define the problem/issue being addressed, including supporting data. Provide detailed explanation of how the proposed service differs from other similar services being provided in the same area.
    e. <u>**Staffing Considerations**</u> – Personnel on staff or to be contracted to provide services and their experience with similar Projects. **The Agency has determined that all TAP must increase the number of FTE as a result of the project if the grant funds or matching funds will be used for salaries**
    f. <u>Project Timeline</u> – Statement indicating the number of months it will take to complete the Project or service, and
    g. <u>Budget Information</u> – Documentation on cost effectiveness of Project. Provide the cost per UR to be served or the proposed cost of personnel to provide assistance.

14. **<u>Additional Requirements TAP ONLY</u>** – TAP that are nonprofits must provide evidence of their tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service.

15. **<u>Additional Requirements UR ONLY</u>** – UR applications from nonprofits must demonstrate ties to the local area. Local ties can be evidenced in several ways, such as:
    a. Obtaining substantial public funding through taxes revenue bonds, or other local Government sources, and/or substantial voluntary community funding,

   b.  Having a broadly-based ownership and control by members of the community, or
   c.  Demonstrating all of the following characteristics:
   - Members of the organization are primarily from the local rural community;
   - Membership is open to all adults in the local rural community;
   - Members of the organization have ultimate control of the proposed community facility; and
   - The organization receives the majority of its funding from its members or their volunteer efforts.

# Section 5: Application Selection Process

## 5.1    Scoring Criteria

Your application will first be reviewed for completeness and eligibility. All complete and eligible applications will then be scored using the following scoring factors unless otherwise provided in an annual Notice in the Federal Register. Projects receiving the highest scoring will be selected for funding.

(a) Experience: Applicant Experience at developing and implementing successful technical assistance and/or training programs:
   (1) More than 10 years: 40 points
   (2) More than 5 years to 10 years: 25 points
   (3) 3 to 5 years: 10 points

(b) No prior grants received:
   (1) Applicant has never received a TAT Grant: 5 points.

(c) Population: The average population of proposed area(s) to be served:
   (1) 2,500 or less: 15 points
   (2) 2,501 to 5,000: 10 points
   (3) 5,001 to 10,000: 5 points

(d) Median Household Income: The average median household income (MHI) of proposed area to be served is below the higher of the poverty line or:
   (1) 60 percent of the State's MHI: 15 points
   (2) 70 percent of the State MHI: 10 points
   (3) 90 percent of the State's MHI: 5 points

Data from the 2010 American Community Survey from the US Census to be used for MHI and poverty line determinations. Please visit https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml or contact your State Office to obtain this information.

(e) Multi-jurisdictional: The proposed technical assistance or training project is part of a Multi-jurisdictional project. For scoring purposes, a project is considered multi-jurisdictional when the beneficiaries of a single project span more than one jurisdictional area (i.e. – Fire District builds one fire station that serves resident's in City A, Village B, and Township C is eligible for 5 points; a TAP proposing to do project A in City A, project B in Village B, and project C in Township C would not receive any multi-jurisdictional points because the projects are separate and serving less than 3 jurisdictions.
   (1) More than 10 jurisdictions: 15 points

(2) More than 5 to 10 jurisdictions: 10 points
(3) 3 to 5 jurisdictions: 5 points

(f) <u>Soundness of Approach</u>: Up to 10 points
    (1) Needs Assessment: The problem/issue being addressed is clearly defined, supported by data, and addresses the needs;
    (2) Goals & objectives are clearly defined, tied to the need as defined in the work plan, and are measurable;
    (3) Work plan clearly articulates a well thought out approach to accomplishing objectives & clearly identifies who will be served by the project;
    (4) The proposed activities are needed in order for a complete Community Facilities loan and/or grant application.

(g) <u>Matching funds</u>:
    (1) There is evidence of the commitment of other cash funds of 20% of the total project costs 10 points (matching funds ÷ total project cost)
    (2) There is evidence of the commitment of other cash funds of 10% of the total project costs 5 points (matching funds ÷total project cost)

(h) <u>State Director Discretionary Points</u>: The State Director may award up to 10 discretionary points for the highest priority project in each state, up to 7 points for the second highest priority project in each state and up to 5 points for the third highest priority project that address unforeseen exigencies or emergencies, such as the loss of community facility due to an accident or natural disaster, or other areas of need in their particular state and initiatives outlined in Section 1.1. The State Director will place written documentation in the project file each time the State Director assigns these points.

(i) <u>Administrator Discretionary Points</u>: The Administrator may award up to 20 discretionary points for projects to address geographic distribution of funds, emergency conditions caused by economic problems, natural disasters and other initiatives identified by the Secretary, and initiatives outlined in Section 1.1.

## 5.2     Application Selection

Applicants selected for funding will need to accept the conditions set forth in the Letter of Conditions, meet all such conditions, and complete a grant agreement which outlines the terms and conditions of the grant award before grant funds will be disbursed.

Applications that are not complete, not eligible, or not selected for funding due to low scoring will be notified by the Agency. Applications that cannot be funded in the fiscal year that the application was received will not be retained for consideration in the following fiscal year.

## 5.3     Appeals Process

An applicant may seek a review of an Agency decision under this subpart from the appropriate Agency official that oversees the program in question or appeal to the USDA National Appeals Division in accordance with 7 CFR part 11.

# Optional Checklist for Applications

**Application Guide, Section 4**

1    Required Forms
    a.   Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance – Non-construction"       _____
    b.   Standard Form 424A, "Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs"      _____
    c.   Standard Form 424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs"      _____
    d.   Form AD 1047, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transaction"      _____
    e.   Form AD 1049, "Certification Regarding Drug-free Workplace Requirements"      _____
    f.   Form AD 1048, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – Lower Tier Covered Transactions"      _____
    g.   Form RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement"      _____
    h.   Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement" (Under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964)      _____
    i.   Form 1940 Q, Exhibit A-1, "Certification for Contracts, Grants, and Loans"      _____
    j.   Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activity" (include only if grant exceeds $100,000).      _____
    k.   Form AD 3030, "Representations Regarding Felony Conviction And Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants"      _____
    l.   Form AD 3031, "Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status For Corporate Applicant"      _____

2.   Legal Status – Select One Only      _____
    a.   Public Bodies      _____
    b.   Nonprofits      _____
    c.   Indian Tribes      _____

3.   Statement of Compliance      _____
4.   Project Narrative      _____
5.   Financial Information      _____
6.   Matching Funds      _____
7.   Services Provided      _____
8.   Known Relationships      _____
9.   Grantee Selection Criteria      _____
10.  Project Costs      _____
11.  Indirect Costs      _____
12.  Financial Management System      _____
13.  Scoring Information      _____
    a.   UR Identification      _____
    b.   Type of Assistance/Training      _____
    c.   Project Evaluation      _____
    d.   Project Need Documentation      _____
    e.   Staffing Considerations      _____
    f.   Project Timeline      _____
    g.   Budget Information      _____
14.  Additional Requirements – TAP ONLY      _____
15.  Additional Requirements – UR ONLY      _____

**Application Guide, Section 5.1**      _____
    h.   State Director Discretionary Points Justification      _____
    i.   Administrator Discretionary Points Justification      _____

# Helpful Resources

Rules and regulations referenced in this guide:

USDA Rural Development NOSA/NOFA Site (Current and Historical)
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)
Federal Register (7 CFR 3570-Community Programs)
Rural Prosperity Task Force Report
Rural Development TAT Website
Rural Development Publications, Forms and Regulations Website

Online resources referenced in this guide:

Duns & Bradstreet
Grants.gov
Grants.gov Online User Guide
Sam.gov
US Census - American Factfinder
Rural Development State Office Point of Contact Website

Definitions:

Actual Capacity – The demonstrated ability of the Technical Assistance Provider to develop the capacity of Ultimate Recipients in the area of developing applications for the Community Facilities Program, improving the management capabilities of their community facilities, and providing training.

Administrator – The Administrator of the Rural Housing Service.

Applicant – Public bodies and private nonprofit corporations, (such as States, counties, cities, townships, and incorporated towns and villages, boroughs, authorities, districts, and Indian tribes on Federal and State reservations) that has applied for, or intends to apply for, a Technical Assistance and Training Grant under this subpart. The applicant must be either a Technical Assistance Provider or an Ultimate Recipient.

Audit – An examination of an organization's financial Statements by an independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA), for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the fairness with which the Statements present the financial position, results of operations, and changes in cash flows in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and for determining whether the Applicant or Ultimate Recipient of Federal government funding has complied with the applicable laws, regulations, and contract for those events reflected in the financial Statements. All audits must meet the requirements of 2 CFR 200.500-200.518.

Community Ties – The significant ties to the Rural Area that need to be demonstrated by a Nonprofit corporation who is an Ultimate Recipient, by either substantial public funding through taxes, revenue bonds or other local Government sources, and/or substantial voluntary community funding; and, a broadly-based ownership and control by members of the community. It can also be demonstrated by local membership and control characteristics.

Conflict of Interest – A situation in which a person or entity has competing personal, professional, or financial interests that make it difficult for the person or business to act impartially. Regarding use of both grant and matching funds, Federal procurement standards prohibit transactions that involve a real or apparent conflict of interest for owners, employees, officers, agents, or their immediate family members having a financial or other interest in the outcome of the Project; or that restrict open and free competition for unrestrained trade. Specifically, Project funds may not be used for services or goods going to, or coming from, a person or entity with a real or apparent Conflict of Interest, including, but not limited to, owner(s) and their immediate family members. An example of Conflict of Interest occurs when the Grantee's employees, board of directors, or the immediate family of either, have the appearance of a professional or personal financial interest in the Applicant receiving the benefits or services of the grant.

Essential community facility – Those public improvements requisite to the beneficial and orderly development of a community that is operated on a nonprofit basis. (See §3570.62(a)(1) and RD AN No. 4832). An essential community facility that meets all of the following criteria is eligible for funding under the Community Facilities Program:

1. Is a function customarily provided by a local unit of government
2. Is a public improvement needed for orderly development of a rural community;
3. Does not include private affairs, commercial or business undertakings (except for limited authority for industrial parks);
4. Is operated on a nonprofit basis; and
5. Is considered to be in the area of jurisdiction or operation for the public bodies eligible to receive assistance or a similar local rural service area for a not-for-profit corporation owning and operating an essential community facility. A community may be a small city or town, county, or multi-county area depending on the type of essential community facility.

Grant Agreement (Form 3570-4) – The agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the grant award and establishing the guidelines for administering the grant award.

Jurisdiction – A unit of government or other entity with similar powers.  Examples include, but are not limited to: city, county, district, special purpose district, township, town, borough, village, and State.

Letter of Conditions – A legal document presented to the Applicant selected for funding that outlines all conditions that must be agreed to and accepted before final grant approval.

Low Income – A median household income (MHI) that does not exceed the state Non-Metropolitan Median Household Income (SNMHI) or the poverty line, whichever is higher.

Multi-jurisdictional – Concerning two or more Jurisdictions.

Professional services – Services provided by a person or entity having specialized knowledge and skills to plan, design, prepare procurement, construction, or other technical support documents, administer construction contracts, and/or other related services for a Project.

Project – The Technical Assistance that an Applicant is currently planning as described in the Project description in the application, to be financed in whole or in part with Agency assistance.

Secretary – The Secretary of Agriculture

Rural Area – A City, town, or unincorporated area that has a population of not more than 20,000 inhabitants (See RD AN No. 4834).

Technical Assistance – A function such as supervision, oversight, training, or professional consultation related to an Essential Community Facility that is performed for the benefit of an Ultimate Recipient or proposed Ultimate Recipient, which is a problem solving activity, as determined by the Agency.

Technical Assistance Provider – Grantee who will provide technical assistance to Ultimate Recipient.

Ultimate Recipient – Entity receiving assistance from the Grantee.  If a Nonprofit corporation is either applying for funding as an Ultimate Recipient or is benefitting from the TAT Grant as the Ultimate Recipient, it must demonstrate Community Ties to the Rural Area.

# Quick Start Guide for New Grantee Registration

## Helpful Information

SAM an official **free, U.S. government-operated website** – it is FREE to register and maintain your entity registration record in SAM. It is FREE to get help.

### What is an Entity?
In SAM, your company / business / organization is referred to as an "Entity." You register your entity to do business with the U.S. Federal government by completing the registration process in SAM.

### What do I need to get started?

1. **DUNS Number:** You need a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to register your entity in SAM. DUNS numbers are unique for each physical location you are registering. If you do not have one, request a DUNS number for **free** to do business with the U.S. Federal government by visiting Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. It takes no more than 1-2 business days to obtain a DUNS number.

2. **Taxpayer Identification Number:** You need your entity's Taxpayer ID Number (TIN) and Taxpayer Name (as it appears on your most recent tax return). Foreign entities that do not pay employees within the U.S. do not need to provide a TIN. Your TIN is usually your Employer Identification Number (EIN) assigned by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
Sole proprietors may use their Social Security Number (SSN) assigned by the Social Security Administration (SSA) as their TIN, but are strongly encouraged to obtain a free EIN from the IRS by visiting: http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&-Self-Employed/How-to-Apply-for-an-EIN Allow approximately two weeks before your new EIN is ready for use when registering in SAM.

3. **NEW!** You must prepare, sign, and submit a letter designating your Entity Administrator following the instructions posted.

## Steps for Registering

1. Type www.sam.gov in your Internet browser address bar.
2. Create a SAM Individual User Account (be sure to activate the account via the link you will receive by email), then Log In.
3. On the My SAM page, select Entity Registrations from the sub-navigation menu and select Register New Entity.
4. Select your type of Entity.
5. If you are registering in SAM.gov so you can apply for a Federal financial assistance opportunity on Grants.gov, and are not interested in pursuing Federal contracts, you will have a much shorter registration path. To choose the grants only path:
   - Select "I only want to apply for federal assistance opportunities like grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs." in response to the question "Why are you registering this entity to do business with the U.S. government?"
6. Complete the Core Data section:
   - Validate your DUNS information.
   - Enter Business Information (TIN, etc.) This page is also where you create your Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN). Remember your MPIN as it will help identify you in several other government systems. You must have it to apply in Grants.gov.
   - Enter your CAGE Code if you have one. CAGE codes are tied to DUNS Numbers and cannot be reused. Don't worry if you don't have a CAGE Code for the DUNS Number you are registering: one will be assigned to you after your registration is submitted. Foreign registrants must enter their NCAGE Code before proceeding.
   - Enter General Information (business types, organization structure, etc.) about your entity.
   - Provide your entity's Financial Information, i.e. U.S. bank Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Information for Federal government payment purposes. Foreign entities do not need to provide EFT information.
   - Answer the Executive Compensation questions.
   - Answer the Proceedings Details questions.
7. Complete the Points of Contact section:
   - Your Electronic Business POC is integral to your Grants.gov registration and application process. Your Government POC will be used by other government systems, such as the CAGE program, when they contact you. List someone with direct knowledge of this registration for both of those POCs.
8. Make sure to select Submit after your final review. You will get Registration Submitted - Confirmation message on the screen. If you do not see this message, you have not submitted your registration.

Your registration will be reviewed. You will receive an email from SAM.gov when your registration is active.
**Please give yourself plenty of time before your grant application submission deadline. Allow up to 12-15 business days after you submit before your registration is active in SAM, then an additional 24 hours for Grants.gov to recognize your information.**
For help registering in SAM, contact the supporting Federal Service Desk (FSD) at at https://www.fsd.gov/