

2021 Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

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DLT Webinar



Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

Webinar Roadmap

- A. The Basics
- B. Eligibility
- C. Matching
- D. Scoring
- E. Applying
- F. Assistance

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program – The Basics

Hierarchy of authority for the DLT Program

1. Statute: 7 U.S.C. 950aaa et seq.
2. Regulation: 7 CFR 1734, Subparts A and B
3. Funding Opportunity Announcement published April 5, 2021
4. DLT Application Guide, Fiscal Year 2021
5. This Webinar

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program – The Basics

Distance Learning

- Distance Learning means a **real-time, interactive, telecommunications link** to an end-user through the use of eligible equipment for the following purposes:
 - Provide educational programs, instruction, or information originating in one area, whether rural or not, to students and teachers who are located in rural areas; or
 - Connect teachers and students, located in one rural area with teachers and students who are located in a different rural area.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program – The Basics

Telemedicine

- Telemedicine is a **real-time, interactive, 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.
 - Benefits rural residents both in reduced travel and improved access to service

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program – The Basics

Available Funding

FY2020 Window 1 - \$71.7 million available

- **\$12 million** for projects to address opioid epidemic
- **\$9.4 million** for projects to address substance use disorder
- **\$50.3 million** for all eligible DLT projects

Window 2

- **\$24.25 million** for all eligible DLT projects (CARES Act funds)
- Carryover from Window 1 & additional funds, if available

FY2021 Total of \$44.5 million available

- **\$10.2 million** for projects to address substance use disorder
- **\$34.3 million** for all eligible DLT projects
- Available funds may increase depending on carryover funds, recoveries, or additional appropriations.

Program Updates

FY2020

- **FOA #1:** February 10 - April 10, 2020
- **276** applications received for **\$155.9 million**
- **180 applications eligible totaling \$101.4 million**
- **117** applications approved for **\$72.4 million**

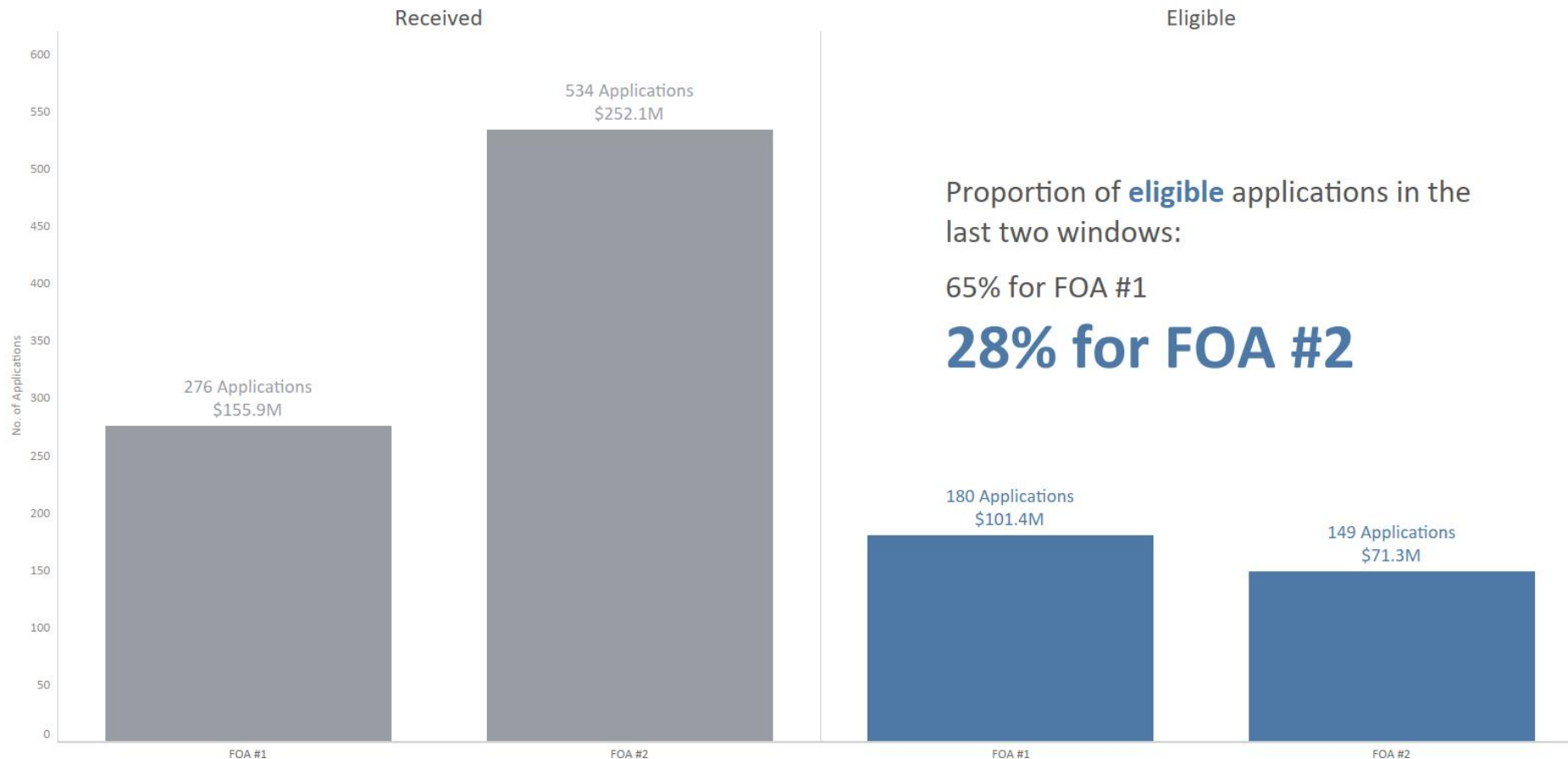
- **FOA #2:** April 14 - July 13, 2020
- **534** applications received for **\$252.1 million**
- **149 applications eligible totaling \$71.3 million**
- **86** applications approved for **\$42.3 million**

FY2021

- FOA published April 5, 2021
- **Applications due June 4, 2021 via Grants.gov only**
- Awards will range from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program – The Basics

FY 2021 Goal: Increase Number of **Eligible** Applications



Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program – The Basics

Changes for FY 2021

- Only one application per applicant is eligible for approval.
- RUS will not transfer awards to another entity because the applicant cannot close the award, execute the agreement or own the grant assets.
- Economic Need scoring will now average scores for each site rather than poverty percentage for each site.
- Changes to Special Consideration: 20 points for service to Tribal Lands but No points for STEM or Opportunity Zones

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Eligibility

Applicant Eligibility

- The following entity types are eligible to apply:
 - Incorporated organization (for-profit or not-for-profit)
 - Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304
 - State or local unit of government
 - Consortium as defined in 1734.3
 - Limited liability company or other legal entity
 - **Almost every entity except individuals & partnerships**

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Eligibility

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 provided. A consortium can be **formal** or **informal**.
- A **formal** consortium is legally organized and can contract with the Government. It can apply under its own name.
- An **informal** consortium cannot contract; it has two options:
 1. Select a host organization which will apply on behalf of the consortium and be designated the project owner with all awardee responsibilities; or
 2. Each individual entity must contract with RUS on its own behalf.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Eligibility

Eligible Grant Purposes *(See DLT Application Guide for details)*

- Acquiring, by lease or purchase eligible equipment.
 - If leased, the cost of the lease during the 3-year life of the grant is eligible.
 - Broadband facilities must be applicant owned & are limited to 20% of grant
- Acquiring instructional programming that is a capital asset (including the purchase or lease of instructional programming already on the market)
- Providing technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment. (category limited to 10% of grant)

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Eligibility

Examples of eligible equipment

- Computer hardware & software
 - Telemedical devices
 - Microphones
 - Cameras
 - Speakers
 - Monitors & other display devices
 - Inside wiring
 - Broadband facilities, **if applicant-owned**
- ✓ 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.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Eligibility

Ineligible Grant Purposes *(See DLT Application Guide for details)*

- Medical or educational equipment not having telemedicine or distance learning as its essential function
- Electronic Medical Record Systems
- Salaries, administrative, operating, or recurring expenses (including recurring broadband connection fees)
- Application preparation costs
- Purchase of land, buildings, building construction, site development, or destruction or alteration of buildings.
- Any purpose not specifically contained in 7 CFR 1734.21

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Matching

Matching Contribution (15% of the grant amount required)

- Can either be cash (**recommended**) or in-kind
- **Must be for a purpose that would be otherwise eligible for grant funding** and must be integral to the project
- Cannot include federal funds unless there is a federal statutory exception
- Only new, non-depreciated equipment with an established value may be considered an in-kind match
- Vendor discounts or supplied equipment is not an eligible match
- Special matching provisions for American Samoa, Guam, Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Scoring

Scoring – Maximum possible is 120 points

- **Objective Criteria (90 points)**
 - Rurality (40 points)
 - Economic Need (30 points)
 - Special Consideration (20 points)
- **Subjective Criteria (30 points)**
 - Needs and Benefits

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Scoring

Objective Criteria: Rurality (40 points max)

- Score is determined by the 2010 census population of the community in which each End-User Site is located **and adjacent urban areas** (see DLT Map at <http://ruraldevelopment.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=15a73830555645ae93d2fa773ed8e971> to check if a location is non-rural).
- An End-User Site is a facility that will be used by end-users to receive services from the project. Project equipment must be placed at a site for it to be considered an end-user site for scoring purposes.
- **Non-fixed end-user site projects** have rurality determined by Hub locations.
- Rurality scores per site are 40, 30, 20, or 0, & are averaged to determine score.
- A minimum rurality score of 20 is required for project eligibility.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

Objective Criteria: Economic Need (30 points max)

- Score is determined by the Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) poverty percentage for the county in which each End-User Site is located.
- Economic Need scores **per site** will be 30, 20, 10, or 0.
- Scores for each site **are averaged** to determine the score for the application.
- **Non-fixed end-user site projects** have scores determined by Hub locations.
- The SAIPE values being used for 2021 are values for 2019 released by the Census Bureau in December 2020. They are posted on the DLT site.
- Each End-User site located in a geographic area for which no SAIPE data exists will be determined to have a poverty percentage of 30% and a score of 30.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Scoring

Objective Criteria: Special Consideration (20 points max)

- **20 points** may be awarded for projects that have at least one end-user site providing service on **Tribal Lands**.
- **10 points** may be awarded for projects that have **Opioid or other Substance Use Disorder Treatment** as their primary purpose.
- **0 points** are available in FY 2021 for **STEM** or **Opportunity Zones**
- Eligibility for points should be identified on the Special Consideration Worksheet and supported by the application
- Applicants will receive points in no more than one area, even if both categories apply

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Scoring

Tribal Lands

- Only applies to Federally Recognized Indian Tribes ([See FR 1/29/2021](#))
- Non-tribal applicants must submit a tribal resolution authorizing the proposed service on tribal lands included as part of the application in order to receive Special Consideration points.
- Site Worksheet must support the claim that service is being provided on tribal lands

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Scoring

Opioid or other Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment

- Eligible treatment 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
- Even if the application serves Tribal Lands, please request Opioid/SUD Treatment Special Consideration, if appropriate
- The Executive Summary should clarify if SUD treatment includes opioids

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Scoring

Subjective Criteria: Needs & Benefits (30 points max)

- 1. Need for Services:** the economic, geographic, educational, or health care challenges facing the communities in the project. Documentation should support the claims.
- 2. Benefits Derived from Services:** how the proposed project will help resolve the problems identified. Identification of benefits should include quantifiable goals (e.g. # students projected to take new courses, # patients to receive care, time saved seeking medical treatment)
- 3. Local Community Involvement:** participation in the planning and development of project by local residents and organizations. Documentation of meetings, support, including contributions.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Applying

Completing the Grant Application **(Note changes to Sections!)**

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

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Applying

J. Compliance with other Federal Statutes

Application checklist available on the DLT website should be inserted under Section J signed by an authorized representative

By signing this certification, you are agreeing to the language in schedules J-1, J-2, J-3 J-4, and J-5, as shown in the application guide. If a box checked in Section J above requires an attachment, the attachment is provided with this application. If you have any questions about your application, please contact RUS prior to submitting this application and certification.

Print Name and Title below the line (sign on the line).

Date

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Applying

System for Award Management (SAM – www.sam.gov)

- **Registration is required:** All applicants must have an active SAM registration **prior** to submitting an application. It can take up to 12-15 business days after submitting a SAM registration for it to be active. Plan accordingly.
- **Registration must be active:** The registration must remain active with current information at all times while RUS is considering an application or while a DLT grant is active.
- **Financial assistance certifications and representations must have been made:** If you didn't make these certifications when registering or updating, edit your registration in SAM to include the certifications before applying. **Without the certifications, you are not eligible for a grant.**

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Applying

DLT Worksheets (available on website)

- Site Worksheet
- Rurality Worksheet
- Economic Need Worksheet (averages scores for each site)
- Special Consideration Worksheet (reflects revised categories)
- Matching Worksheet
- Budget Worksheet (divided into Grant/Cash Match & In-Kind sections)

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Applying

Application Submission – **Deadline is June 4, 2021**

- Electronically via grants.gov
- **Submission cutoff is 11:59pm EDT**
- SAM.gov registration with **grant certifications** must be completed first!
Allow a few weeks time to be sure you won't get shut out.
- Only form SF-424 is completed in Grants.gov. Everything else is attached.

Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program - Assistance

Sources of Assistance

- Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>
- App Guide: https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fy2021_dlt_app_guide.pdf
- General Field Representatives (GFR): Applicants may contact their GFR for technical assistance up to 14 days prior to closing date of application window. GFR listing is found at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr>
- DLT Mailbox: DLTInfo@usda.gov
- RUS National Office: 202-720-0800



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