Community Connect Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2026
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Number: RDRUS-CC-2026

Publication Date: May 13, 2026
Application Due Date: June 29, 2026

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Administrator

Rural Utilities Service

BASIC INFORMATION

Funding Opportunity Title: Community Connect Grant Program

Funding Opportunity Number: RDRUS-CC-2026

Announcement Type: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Assistance Listing Number: 10.863

Dates: Completed electronic applications must be filed through https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grantshttps://www.rd.usda.gov/community-connect. The application window opens on May 13, 2026. Completed applications for grants must be submitted electronically by no later than 11:59 AM ET, June 29, 2026. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Executive Summary:

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS or the Agency), a Rural Development (RD) agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), announces acceptance of applications under the Community Connect Grant Program for fiscal year (FY) 2026. These grant funds will be made available to eligible applicants to construct broadband networks that provide service on a community-oriented connectivity basis 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 Community Connect Grant (CCG) program provides financial assistance to eligible applicants that will provide service at or above the broadband grant speed to all premises in rural, economically-challenged communities where broadband service does not exist. The deployment of broadband services on a "community-oriented connectivity" basis stimulates economic development and provides enhanced educational and health care opportunities in rural areas.

1.2 Statutory and Regulatory Authority

The CCG program is authorized under the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (RE Act) and implemented by 7 CFR part 1739.

1.3 Definitions

The definitions applicable to this notice are published at 7 CFR 1739.3 and repeated within the FY 2026 CCG Program Application Guide (Application Guide) available at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grants~~https://www.rd.usda.gov/community-connect~~.

1.4 Application of Awards

Awards under the CCG program will be made on a competitive basis using specific review criteria contained in 7 CFR 1739.16. The Agency will review, evaluate and score applications received in response to this notice based on the provisions found in 7 CFR 1739.17 and as indicated in this notice. 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 has $17 million available for FY 2026 RUS may at its discretion, increase the total level of funding available in this funding round from any available source provided the awards meet the requirements of the statute which made the funding available to the agency.

Minimum Award: $100,000

Maximum Award: $5~~3~~,000,000

Anticipated Award Date: September 2026

Performance Period: 3 years

Renewal or Supplemental Awards: While prior Community Connect grants cannot be renewed, existing Community Connect awardees can submit applications for new projects. The Agency will evaluate

project proposals from existing awardees as new applications. Only one grant application per applicant is eligible for approval under this grant opportunity.

Type of Assistance Instrument: Grant

3.0 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

3.1 Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must meet the eligibility requirements of 7 CFR 1739.10. Only entities legally organized as one of the following are eligible for Community Connect Grant Program financial assistance:

(a) Incorporated organization;

(b) Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304;

(c) State government;

(d) Local unit of government;

(e) Any other legal entity, including a cooperative, private corporation, or limited liability company organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis.

References in this program to a state, state government, or state agency are meant to include the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands.

Applicants must have the legal capacity and authority to enter into contracts, to comply with applicable federal statutes and regulations, and to own and operate the broadband facilities as proposed in their application. 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.

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.

3.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

The Program requires matching contributions as specified in 7 CFR 1739.14. The Application Guide provides additional information on required matching contributions.

3.3 Other

All submitted proposals must meet the eligibility requirements listed at 7 CFR 1739.11. For FY 2026 applications, the following additional eligibility requirements apply:

(a) Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA). The applicant must define a contiguous geographic, area located entirely within an eligible rural area, in which Broadband Service does not exist and where the applicant proposes to offer service at the Broadband Grant Speed to all residential and business customers. The PFSA may consist of multiple municipalities and may be located in more than one state.

(i) RUS will validate that broadband service does not exist in areas that applicants describe as having no broadband access or access that is less than 10 Megabits per second (Mbps) downstream plus 1 Mbps upstream. For the purposes of this notice, the Agency will leverage the latest version of the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Location Fabric dataset, which is a standardized list of locations for the Broadband Data Collection, to help determine the number of premises located in the PFSA.

(ii) The broadband grant speed is 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream for fixed terrestrial broadband service, whether fixed or wireless.

(iii) A PFSA must not overlap with service areas of current RUS borrowers and grantees.

(iv) Areas already receiving federal funding to construct terrestrial facilities providing at least 10 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream service in the project PFSA as of the date of this notice, and which have been reported to the Agency, are ineligible. As a result, no CCG funds may be used to duplicate costs, services, connections, facilities, or equipment that have been authorized under such areas. Applicants submitting a project to serve an area in which the same entity has already received final approval for other federal funding must explain in the application why CCG funding is being requested and why RUS should provide additional funding, as funds must not be used for duplicative purposes. Awardees that receive both other federal funds and CCG funding must submit a statement certifying that the funds requested from the CCG program have not and will not be reimbursed by another federal award nor used to reimburse another federal award, and that the Awardee will keep separate accounts for each source of funding to track the uses of the funding to support the certification statement submitted with the CCG application. RUS can consider adjusting the service area or award amount of a project selected for CCG funding if, in the course of evaluating an application, the Agency learns that the service area or a portion of it is already sufficiently served or has received final approval for federal funding to construct facilities that will provide sufficient access to broadband service as defined under this notice.

(v) Areas that have an Enforceable Commitment at the time of publication of this notice are ineligible for CCG funds. For this notice only, Enforceable Commitment means a legally enforceable

obligation by any federal, state, or local agency, utilizing federal funds, to provide broadband service with speeds of at least 10Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream. Enforceable commitments do not negate the Agency's intention to coordinate and communicate with federal partners before extending an offer to ensure awards made under this application window do not duplicate awards made by other federal and state partners. However, if an applicant submits evidence that the entity that received the Enforceable Commitment has not deployed broadband service as required by the awarding Agency's regulations or award documents, the Agency may consider such area eligible for funding after consultation with the awarding agency. To assist applicants with identifying areas that are already receiving federal funds to deploy broadband, areas with Enforceable Commitments are identified in a GIS layer located in the RUS mapping tool and on the FCC's National Broadband Funding Map found at https://fundingmap.fcc.gov/home.

(vi) Correspondence from the appropriate Tribal entity is required if service is being proposed over or on the Tribal Lands which are identified in the Community Connect mapping tool. Any applicant that fails to provide correspondence with the Tribal entity to provide service on the Tribal Lands identified in the PFSA will not be considered for funding. The intent of the correspondence is to ensure upfront that Federally Recognized Tribes being served by a non-tribal applicant authorize the application in a legally-binding manner AND the construction of broadband infrastructure on their lands if an award is made. It is not intended to limit participation of Tribes in other Federal broadband programs that complement a USDA funded project. However, all environmental, permitting and rights of way requirements must still be completed, and adhered to, by applicants prior to initiating construction on Tribal Lands. Therefore, ongoing communication and collaboration will be required to ensure the timely, and mutually agreeable, build out of the funded infrastructure. As appropriate, during the application review process, USDA staff may contact applicants and Tribes to confirm Tribal consent. Applicants and Tribes that have questions regarding this process are encouraged to contact Telecom Program staff at https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr, USDA Rural Development's Tribal Relations Team or USDA's Office of Tribal Relations.

(vi) The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Public Law 117-103), the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328), and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42) included funding under the ReConnect Program for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending projects. The proposed service areas for these projects are not eligible for funding under this NOFO. A GIS layer of the proposed service areas for these projects will be made available in the CCG mapping tool located at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grants~~https://www.rd.usda.gov/community-connect~~.

(b) Essential Community Facilities. The applicant must propose to offer free service at the Broadband Grant Speed to all participating Essential Community Facilities located within the PFSA for at least two (2) years.

(c) Community Center. The applicant must provide a Community Center within the PFSA with a minimum of two (2), and up to ten (10), computer access points and wireless access at the Broadband Grant Speed, free of all charges, to all users for at least two (2) years. Grant funds used for the

improvement, expansion, construction, or acquisition of a community center must not exceed the lesser of 10 percent of the requested grant amount or $150,000.

(d) Cybersecurity risk management. It is the policy of the United States to strengthen the security and resilience of its critical infrastructure against both physical and cyber threats. Applicants selected for Federal funding under this notice must demonstrate, prior to the signing of the award agreement, a concerted effort to consider and address cybersecurity risks consistent with the cybersecurity performance goals for critical infrastructure and control systems directed by the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Improving Cybersecurity for Critical Infrastructure Control Systems, or the current draft of these goals, found at https://www.cisa.gov/cross-sector-cybersecurity-performance-goals.

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: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grantshttps://www.usda.gov/community-connect. Application information is also available at https://www.grants.gov/.

4.2 Content and Form of Application Submission

(a) Application Completion. Carefully review the Application Guide and 7 CFR part 1739, which detail all relevant forms and worksheets. The components of a complete application can be found at 7 CFR 1739.15, and the Application Guide and Community Connect Application Checklist.

(b) Submission of Application Items. Given the high volume of program interest, applicants should submit the application items in the order indicated in the Application Guide. Applications that are not assembled and tabbed in the specified order prevent timely determination of eligibility. For FY 2026, one proposal per applicant is eligible for approval. If an applicant submits more than one proposal, then the Agency will only consider the application with the highest score.

4.3 Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

(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. Instructions for obtaining the UEI are available at https://sam.gov/content/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) Applicants 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, as long as such requests are made prior to the closing of the application window.

(b) Application Deadline Date: Completed electronic applications must be filed through https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grantshttps://www.rd.usda.gov/community-connect. The application window opens on May 13, 2026. Completed applications for grants must be submitted electronically by no later than 11:59 AM ET, June 29, 2026.

(c) Applications Received After Deadline Date: If completed applications are not received by the application deadline date provided in Section 4.4(b) above, the application will neither be reviewed nor considered for funding under any circumstances.

4.5 Intergovernmental Review

Executive Order (EO) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, does not apply to this program.

4.6 Funding Restrictions

Ineligible grant purposes are operating expenses not specifically permitted in § 1739.12. Grant funds may not be used to finance the duplication of lines, facilities, or systems providing broadband service.

4.7 Other Submission Requirements

Applications will not be accepted via mail, fax or electronic mail. Electronic applications for grants must be submitted through the Agency's online application intake system. The Agency's online application intake system can be found on the CCG website at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grants .https://www.rd.usda.gov/community-connect.

The Agency's online application intake system requires all users to obtain Level II eAuthentication (eAuth) accounts and for applicant users to submit an Authorized Representative Request (ARR) and a resolution in order to access the Agency's online application intake system to submit an application. These procedures may take several business days to complete; therefore, the applicant should complete

the registration, credentialing, and authorization procedures before submitting an application. eAuth partnered with Login.gov to provide our public customers multi-factor authentication (MFA) login options for secure and convenient access to USDA sites. For USDA sites that require users to login using Login.gov credentials, those users will need to link their eAuth accounts with their Login.gov accounts. Once a public customer links a Login.gov account to eAuth, the customer will use it for all future access to eAuth protected USDA applications. Instructions on creating a Level II eAuthentication account are available at: https://www.eauth.usda.gov/home/. Instructions on creating a Login.gov account and linking it to eAuth are available at: https://login.gov/. If system errors or technical difficulties occur, use the Contact Us Form available on the Community Connect website at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grants#contact.

The Agency reserves the right to ask applicants for clarifying information and additional verification of assertions in the application.

5.0 APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

5.1 Criteria

(a) Scoring Criteria. All scoring criteria is outlined in 7 CFR 1739.17 and in the Application Guide.

(b) Ineligible Areas. RUS will not fund projects located in an area that does not meet the definition of "rural area" found in 7 CFR 1739.3.

(c) Pending Applications. RUS will not fund more than one project that proposes to provide broadband service in the same geographic area. If a project overlaps the PFSA of an application already submitted to the Rural eConnectivity Program (ReConnect Program), the Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan and Loan Guarantee Program, or the Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program, the project will not be considered until a determination is made on the previously submitted application.

(d) Substantially Underserved Trust Areas (SUTA). Applicants seeking assistance may request consideration under the SUTA provisions in 7 U.S.C. 936f.

(i) If the Administrator determines that a community within “trust land” (as defined in 38 U.S.C. 3765) has a high need for the benefits of the Program, the Administrator may designate the community as a “substantially underserved trust area” (as defined in section 306F of the RE Act).

(ii) To receive consideration under SUTA, the applicant must submit to the Agency a completed application that includes all information requested in 7 CFR Part 1700, Subpart D. In addition, the application must identify the discretionary authorities within Subpart D that it seeks to have applied to its application.

5.2 Review Selection Processes

Once the Agency has received the application, the Agency will publish a public notice of each application in accordance with 7 CFR 1739.15(l). The CCG Public Notice Filings for each application may be found at https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-

connect-grants ~~https://www.rd.usda.gov/community-connect and~~ clicking the "Public Notice Filings" button. The Agency will use the information submitted to determine if there is sufficient access to broadband in any part of the PFSA. Public notice responders should note that the Agency may request additional information or work directly with the responder to verify the accuracy of its public notice response. Additionally, responders should be aware that the agency will use all available rights and remedies for responses to the Agency that are clearly inaccurate despite the responder's certification to the government otherwise, and that such filings abuse federal resources intended to ensure that the Agency validate eligible applications. In the event there are no public notice responses to a CCG application, the Agency will still use all information available in evaluating the eligibility of the project.

Grants are awarded in rank order, subject to the availability of funds and consistent with 7 CFR 1739.16 and 7 CFR 1739.17. It should be noted that an application receiving fewer points can be selected over an application receiving more points in the event that there are insufficient funds available to cover the costs of the higher scoring application or if the higher scoring application would consume a disproportionate amount of funds available relative to its ranking, as stated in 7 CFR 1739.16(f).

The Agency reserves the right to offer the applicant a lower amount than the amount proposed in the application, as stated in 7 CFR 1739.16(g).

If the Agency receives more than one proposal from the same applicant, then the Agency will only consider the application with the highest score, except in accordance with 7 CFR 1739.16(f).

6.0 FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

6.1 Federal Award Notices

(a) RUS notifies applicants whose projects are selected for awards by mailing and/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.

(b) 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.

6.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The items listed in this announcement, the CCG program regulation, the Application Guide, and program resources implement the appropriate administrative and national policy requirements, which include but are not limited to:

(a) Executing a CCG Agreement.

(b) Using Form SF 270, "Request for Advance or Reimbursement," to request reimbursements (along with the submission of receipts for expenditures, timesheets, and any other documentation to support the request for reimbursement).

(c) Ensuring that records are maintained to document all activities and expenditures utilizing CCG funds and matching funds (receipts for expenditures are to be included in this documentation).

(d) Complying with policies, guidance, and requirements as described in the following applicable Code of Federal Regulations, and any successor regulations:

(i) 2 CFR parts 200 and 400 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards). The government must be provided an exclusive first lien on all grant assets during the service obligation of the grant, and thereafter any sale or disposition of grant assets must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, codified in 2 CFR Part 200. Note that this part will apply to ALL grant funds of an Awardee, regardless of the entity status or type of organization.

(ii) 2 CFR parts 417 and 180 (Governmentwide Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension).

(1) The policies contained in this subpart apply to recipients. As recipients of federal financial assistance, awardees are required to comply with the applicable federal, state and local laws. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination by recipients of federal financial assistance. Recipients are required to adhere to specific outreach activities. These outreach activities include contacting community organizations and leaders that include minority leaders; advertising in local newspapers and other media throughout the entire service area; and including the nondiscrimination slogan, "This is an Equal Opportunity Program. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law," in methods that may include, but not be limited to, advertisements, public broadcasts, and printed materials, such as brochures and pamphlets. All recipients must submit and have on file a valid Form RD 400-1 (Equal Opportunity Agreement); and RD Form 400-4 (Assurance Agreement).

(2) By completing the SAM Certification and Representations, recipients affirm they will operate the program free from discrimination. The recipient will maintain the race and ethnic data on the board members and beneficiaries of the program. The recipient will provide alternative forms of communication to persons with limited English proficiency. The Agency will conduct Civil Rights Compliance Reviews on recipients to identify the collection of racial and ethnic data on program beneficiaries. In addition, the Compliance Review will ensure that equal access to the program benefits and activities are provided for persons with disabilities and language barriers.

(e) Civil Rights. 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.

6.3 Reporting

(a) Annual Project Performance Activity Report. All recipients of Community Connect financial assistance must provide annual project 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 Community Connect Grant Program objectives. See 7 CFR 1739.19 for additional information on these reporting requirements.

(b) Annual Performance Report. For three years starting the first January 31st after Project Completion, the Awardee must submit the following information utilizing RUS' online reporting system:

(i) Existing network service improvements and facility upgrades, as well as new equipment and capacity enhancements that support high-speed broadband access for educational institutions, health care providers, and public safety service providers;

(ii) The estimated number of end users who are currently using or forecasted to use the new or upgraded infrastructure;

(iii) The progress towards fulfilling the objectives for which the assistance was granted;

(iv) The speed and average price of the most subscribed tier of the Awardee's broadband service offerings in the Project's service area;

(v) The price and number of subscribers who are subscribing to service at the Broadband Grant Speed of 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream; and

(vi) The average price of broadband service in the Project's service area.

(c) Annual Map Reporting: No later than thirty (30) calendar days after the end of the Calendar Year, the Awardee shall be required to submit an updated Approved Project Service Area map through RUS' online mapping tool showing the areas where construction has been completed and geospatial location of residences and businesses that are receiving new broadband service until the entire Approved Project Service Area can receive the broadband service.

(d) Financial Reporting. All recipients of Community Connect financial assistance must provide an annual audit, consistent with the Community Connect grant agreement, and the applicable USDA audit regulations at 7 CFR 1739.20, 7 CFR part 1773, or 2 CFR part 200, subpart F, as applicable.

(e) 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 subawards 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:

(i) First Tier Subawards of $30,000 or more (unless they are exempt under 2 CFR Part 170) must be reported by the recipient to fsrs.gov no later than the end of the month following the month the obligation was made. There is currently underway a consolidation of eight federal procurement systems, including the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS), into one system, SAM. As a result, the FSRS will soon be consolidated into and accessed through sam.gov.

(ii) 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 https://sam.gov by the end of the month following the month in which the award was made.

(iii) The total compensation of the subrecipient's executives (the five most highly compensated executives) must be reported by the subrecipient (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 subaward was made.

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

7.0 FEDERAL AWARD AGENCY CONTACTS

The CCG website maintains up-to-date resources and contact information for the CCG Program. The CCG has a Contact page located at https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/telecommunications-programs/community-connect-grants#contact. For inquiries regarding eligibility concerns, please contact your General Field Representative (GFR) at: https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr. Persons with disabilities that require alternative means for communication should contact the 711 Relay Service.

8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 Build America, Buy America

1. *Funding to Non-Federal Entities*. 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 (BABA) within the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Public Law 117-58. Any requests for waiver of these requirements must be submitted pursuant to USDA's guidance available online at https://www.usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver.

2. *Funding to All Other Entities*. Awardees that are not Non-Federal Entities shall be governed by the Agency's Buy American requirement at 7 CFR part 1787. Any requests for waiver of these requirements must be submitted pursuant to those regulations.

8.2 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 0572-0127.

8.3 National Environmental Policy Act

All recipients under this Notice are subject to the requirements of 7 CFR Part 1b.

8.4 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.

8.5 Civil Rights Act

All grants made under this notice are subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as required by the USDA (7 CFR Part 15 Subpart A -- Nondiscrimination in Federally-Assisted Programs of the Department of Agriculture - Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, Title IX, and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974.

8.6 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.

8.7 Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (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, audiotape, 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, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from 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: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov

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