

## RUS Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant

The purpose of this program is to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America through the use of advanced telecommunications technologies. There are DLT grants, loans, and loan-grant combinations that help rural communities enjoy enhanced educational opportunities, improved health care services and greater economic development.

**CFDA Number:** 10.855

**Program Type:** Discretionary/Competitive Grants

**Website:** <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm>

### How Much Funding is Available?

- The range of awards is \$50,000 - \$500,000.
- There is a minimum 15% match for this grant. It is highly recommended to review the evaluation criteria and strive for no less than 30% match.
- The expected application window is January to March 2009. We will notify prospective applicants of the exact dates as soon as the announcement is made.
- This grant program is highly competitive and grantees are chosen from across the nation. A well planned project as well as demonstrated commitment to your project will help you succeed in this grant program.
- The 100% Loan and Loan/Grant Combination programs can provide funding up to \$10,000,000. For large projects, this is an excellent funding resource, and 2009 could be the last year for the Loan/Grant program.

### What will RUS Fund?

- Acquiring eligible equipment, that is, equipment that is primarily used for distance learning or telemedicine.
  - **The application must demonstrate both 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 and/or telemedicine, and further, that none of the use is for ineligible purposes.** If not the primary purpose (less than 50% ), the applicant can propose that a portion of the line item be budgeted for grant or match based on the proportion that does provide distance learning or telemedicine.
- Acquiring instructional programming, including programming that is already on the market.
- Acquiring technical assistance for the eligible equipment.
- Acquiring training and manufacturer warranties for equipment.

### **Who is Eligible?**

- Agencies, organizations and consortiums that provide distance learning or telemedicine services can participate.
- Rurality requirements are strictly enforced. This program focuses on end users that are very isolated and faced with economic need.
- Bonus points are awarded to applications that include EZ/EC and Champion Communities
- Urban sites can be part of an application, but, for a higher objective score, should be kept to Hub sites. Equipment at these sites might be limited by program requirements.

### **Characteristics of Successful Applicants:**

- Objective Qualities
  - Rurality – as defined by U.S. Census data. End user sites must be populations of 20,000 or less.
  - NSLP – high economic need is essential (additional the higher, the better)
  - Match – 15% is the minimum, but the more you invest in your project, the more points you receive in your application's objective score. While in-kind matches are acceptable, cash is preferred.
  - EZ/EC and Champion Communities – Inclusion of sites within these communities can add up to 15 bonus points to your grant score.
- Subjective Qualities
  - Innovative use of the equipment or unique applications.
  - Demonstration of extreme need, consider low test scores, few advanced classes, or extreme health needs.
  - Demonstration of cost effective programs.

### **How can TANDBERG Help?**

- We work with a team of grant writers and have extensive experience with this grant program.
- We will work with applicant organizations and agencies providing application guidance and an extra set of "eyes."
- We will provide budgeting and expenditure guidance.
- We will keep you up to date on new grant opportunities.

### **Additional Resources:**

- Madeline Keller, Region Grants Programs Manager – Mid Atlantic  
512-241-1506 or [Madeline.Keller@tandberg.com](mailto:Madeline.Keller@tandberg.com)  
TANDBERG [www.tandberg.com](http://www.tandberg.com)

