3 Agencies – One RD

Rural Development

- Rural Business-Cooperative Service
- Rural Housing Service
- Rural Utilities Service
Rural Development Structure

47 State Offices
400+ Area Offices
1 National Office in DC

*Contact your GFR
General Field Representative
Rural Utilities Service

RUS provides funding for much-needed infrastructure or infrastructure improvements to rural and Tribal communities. These include water and waste treatment, electric power, and telecommunications services. All of these services help to expand economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for rural areas and Tribal Lands.
• Funding to construct, expand, and upgrade broadband infrastructure, and increase access to distance learning and telemedicine in rural and Tribal communities.

• Areas with a population of 20,000 or less.

• Loans, Grants, and Loan/Grant combos.

• For-profit and non-profit entities, federally recognized Tribes, municipalities, and cooperatives.

• Exclusively focused on rural and Tribal broadband.
Telecommunications Programs

1. Community Connect Grant Program
2. Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program
3. ReConnect Program
4. Special Authority: Substantially Underserved Tribal Areas
1. Community Connect Grant Program

- **Purpose:** Construction and expansion of broadband service in rural communities with a population of 20,000 people or less, where service does not currently exist.
  - Must focus on a single community, must have a community center.
  - Funds can also be used to cover the cost of providing broadband service free of charge in critical community facilities for 2 years.
  - Less than 10% of the grant amount or up to $150,000 may be used for the improvement, expansion, construction or acquisition of a community center that provides online access to the public.

- **Funding Type:** Grants with 15% Matching Fund Requirement.

- **Eligible entities:** Federally recognized Tribes, nonprofits, businesses, coops, etc.

- **Current Status:** Closed
2. Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

- **Purpose:** Equipment to deliver telemedicine service and distance learning curriculums in rural communities with a population of 20,000 people or less.
  - *Distance Learning* – real-time interactive delivery of curriculum via telecommunications and promotes the connection of students and teachers at remote sites.
  - *Telemedicine* – real-time interactive, telecommunications link to an end user from medical professionals at separate sites in order to exchange health care information for the purpose of providing improved health care services to residents of rural areas.
- **Funding Type:** Grants with 15% Matching Fund Requirement.
- **Eligible entities:** Federally recognized Tribes, nonprofits, for-profit businesses, consortia
- **Current Status:** Closed
3. ReConnect Program

- **Purpose:** Construction and expansion of broadband service in rural communities with a population of 20,000 people or less, where sufficient access is not available to at least 90% of the households.

- **Funding Type:** Direct loans, grants, and loan/grant combinations. Grants have a 25% matching requirement.

- **Eligible entities:** Federally recognized Tribes, nonprofits, businesses, coops, etc.

- **Current Status:** Round 3 opening soon!
4. Special Authority: SUTA

Substantially Underserved Trust Area (SUTA)

- RUS Administrator can rely on SUTA to waive some application requirements.
- Applicant must request SUTA consideration for their project.
- If the RUS Administrator determines that a community within Trust Land has a high need for the benefits of a program, the Administrator may designate the community as a “substantially underserved trust area.”
Rural Business Cooperative Service (RBCS)

*Rural Business Development Grants*

RBCS offers programs to help businesses grow as well as job training for people living in rural areas

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**Rural Business Development Grants**

- **Purpose:** Provides technical assistance and training for small and emerging rural businesses, with fewer than 50 new workers and less than $1 million in gross revenue. Supports technical assistance, feasibility studies, purchase of real estate, purchase of equipment. Assistance to business is **indirect**.

- **Funding Type:** Grants, no match requirement.

- **Eligible entities:** Federally recognized Tribes, nonprofits, businesses, coops, etc.

- **Current Status:** **Closed**
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation Example

- Community Connect Grant (2002)
  - $695,832 to build a small fiber network on the reservation and technology center.

- Two RBDG grants helped establish the feasibility for establishing a tribally owned telecom company and to develop online entrepreneurial opportunities for tribal member owned small businesses.

- The Tribe created Warm Springs Telecommunications Company (WSTC)
- 2010 – ARRA BIP grant to build-out hybrid fiber/wireless network
- Warm Springs Academy (CF Loan)
- 2017 RBDG Grant for Business Incubator

https://www.usda.gov/topics/rural/rural-development-innovation-center/innovation-stories
Contact Information

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