



**BILLING CODE 3410-XV**

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Rural Housing Service**

**Notice of Solicitation of Applications for the Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant for Fiscal Year 2018**

**AGENCY:** Rural Housing Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice announces that the Rural Housing Service (Agency) is accepting Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 applications for the Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant program. The Agency is publishing the amount of funding received in the appropriations act on its website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/notices-solicitation-applications-nosas>. Grant funds not obligated by September 15 of this fiscal year can be used to fund Essential Community Facilities grant or loan guarantee programs.

**DATES:** To apply for funds, the Agency must receive the application by 5:00 Eastern Daylight Time on (INSERT 60 DAYS FROM DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**). Electronic applications must be submitted via grants.gov by Midnight Eastern time on (INSERT 60 DAYS FROM DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**). 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 [INSERT DATE 50 DAYS FROM DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**]. Technical assistance is not meant

to be an analysis or assessment of the quality of the materials submitted, a substitute for agency review of completed applications, nor a determination of eligibility, if such determination requires in-depth analysis. The Agency will not solicit or consider scoring or eligibility information that is submitted after the application deadline. The Agency reserves the right to contact applicants to seek clarification information on materials contained in the submitted application.

**ADDRESSES:** Applications will be submitted to the USDA Rural Development State Office in the state where the applicant's headquarters is located. A listing of each State Office can be found at [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF\\_State\\_Office\\_Contacts.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF_State_Office_Contacts.pdf). If you want to submit an electronic application, follow the instructions for the TAT funding announcement on <http://www.grants.gov>. For those applicants located in the District of Columbia, applications will be submitted to the National Office in care of Shirley Stevenson, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., STOP 0787, Room 0175-S, Washington, DC 20250. Electronic applications will be submitted via <http://www.grants.gov>. All applicants can access application materials at <http://www.grants.gov>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The Rural Development office in which the applicant is located. A list of the Rural Development State Office contacts can be found at [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF\\_State\\_Office\\_Contacts.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF_State_Office_Contacts.pdf). Applicants located in Washington D.C. can contact Shirley Stevenson at (202) 205-9685 or via email at [Shirley.Stevenson@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:Shirley.Stevenson@wdc.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Rural Housing Service (RHS), an agency within the USDA Rural Development mission area herein referred to as the Agency, published a final rule with comment in the Federal Register on January 14, 2016,

implementing Section 6006 of the Agriculture Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79) which provides authority to make Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grants. The final rule became effective on March 14, 2016, and is found at 7 CFR 3570, subpart F. A correction amendment was published in the Federal Register on May 6, 2016. The purpose of this Notice is to solicit applications for the FY 2018 TAT Grant Program.

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](http://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

*Paperwork Reduction Act*

The paperwork burden has been cleared by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0575-0198.

*National Environmental Policy Act*

All recipients under this Notice are subject to the requirements of 7 CFR part 1970. However, awards for technical assistance and training under this Notice are

classified as a Categorical Exclusion according to 7 CFR 1970.53(b), and usually do not require any additional documentation. The Agency will review each grant application to determine its compliance with 7 CFR part 1970. The applicant may be asked to provide additional information or documentation to assist the Agency with this determination.

#### Overview

*Federal Agency:* Rural Housing Service.

*Funding Opportunity Title:* Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant.

*Announcement Type:* Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA).

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:* 10.766.

*Dates:* To apply for funds, the Agency must receive the application by 5:00 p.m.

Eastern Daylight Time on (INSERT 60 DAYS FROM DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**). Electronic applications must be submitted via grants.gov by Midnight Eastern time on (INSERT 60 DAYS FROM DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**). The Agency will not consider any application received after this deadline. 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 [INSERT DATE 50 DAYS FROM DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**]. Technical assistance is not meant to be an analysis or assessment of the quality of the materials submitted, a substitute for agency review of completed applications, nor a determination of eligibility, if such determination requires in-depth analysis. The Agency will not solicit or consider scoring or eligibility information that is submitted after the application deadline. The

Agency reserves the right to contact applicants to seek clarification information on materials contained in the submitted application.

*Availability of Notice:* This Notice is available through the USDA Rural Development site at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/notices-solicitation-applications-nosas>.

*I. Funding Opportunity Description*

A. Purpose

Congress authorized the Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant program in Title VI, Section 6006 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79). Program regulations can be found at 7 CFR part 3570, subpart F, which are incorporated by reference in this Notice. The purpose of this Notice is to seek applications from entities that will provide technical assistance and/or training with respect to essential community facilities programs. It is the intent of this program to assist entities in rural areas in accessing funding under the Rural Housing Service's Community Facilities Programs in accordance with 7 CFR part 3570, subpart F. Funding priority will be made to private, nonprofit or public organizations that have experience in providing technical assistance and training to rural entities.

*II. Award Information*

*Type of Awards:* Grants will be made to eligible entities who will then provide technical assistance and/or training to eligible ultimate recipients.

*Fiscal Year Funds:* FY 2018 Technical Assistance Training (TAT) Grant funds.

*Available Funds:* The Agency is publishing the amount of funding received in the appropriations act on its website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/notices->

solicitation-applications-nosas. Up to ten percent 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 75.

*Award Amounts:* Grants will be made in amounts based upon the availability of grant funds, but no grant award 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.

*Award Dates:* Awards will be made from available funding on or before September 15, 2018.

### *III. Eligibility Information*

Both the applicant and the use of funds must meet eligibility requirements. The applicant eligibility requirements can be found at 7 CFR 3570.262. Eligible project purposes can be found at 7 CFR 3570.263. Ineligible project purposes can be found at 7 CFR 3570.264. Restrictions substantially similar to Sections 743, 744, 745, and 746 outlined in Title VII, "General Provisions – Government-Wide" of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Pub. L. 114-113) will apply unless noted on the Rural Development website (<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-technical-assistance-and-training-grant>). Any corporation (i) that has been convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the past 24 months or (ii) that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that 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 provided with funds, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government. In addition, none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this or any other Act may be available for a contract, grant, or cooperative agreement with an entity that requires employees or contractors of such entity seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting such employees or contractors from lawfully reporting such waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information. Additionally, no funds appropriated in this or any other Act may be used to implement or enforce the agreements in Standard Forms 312 and 4414 of the Government or any other nondisclosure policy, form, or agreement if such policy, form, or agreement does not contain the following provisions: “These provisions are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection.”

#### *IV. Application and Submission Information*

The requirements for submitting an application can be found at 7 CFR 3570.267. All Applicants can access application materials at <http://www.grants.gov>. Applications

must be received by the Agency by the due date listed in the “DATES” section of this Notice. Applications received after that due date will not be considered for funding. Paper copies of the applications will be submitted to the State Office in which the applicant is headquartered. Electronic submissions should be submitted at <http://www.grants.gov>. A listing of the Rural Development State Offices may be found at [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF\\_State\\_Office\\_Contacts.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF_State_Office_Contacts.pdf). For applicants whose headquarters are in the District of Columbia, they will submit their application to the National Office in care of Shirley Stevenson, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, STOP 0787, Room 0175-S, Washington, DC 20250. Both paper and electronic applications must be received by the Agency by the deadlines stated in the DATES section of this Notice. The use of a courier and package tracking for paper applications is strongly encouraged.

Application information for electronic submissions may be found at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Applications will not be accepted via FAX or electronic email.

*V. Application Processing*

Applications will be processed and scored in accordance with this NOSA and 7 CFR 3570.273. Those applications receiving the highest points using the scoring factors found at 7 CFR 3570.273 will be selected for funding. 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 75. In the case of a tie, the first tie breaker will go to the applicant who scores the highest on matching funds. If two or more applications are still tied after using this tie breaker, the next tie breaker will go to the applicant who scores the highest in the multi-jurisdictional category.

Once the successful applicants are announced, the State Office will be responsible for obligating the grant funds, executing all obligation documents, and the grant agreement, as provided by the agency.

*VI. Federal Award Administration Information*

1. Federal Award Notice. Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of the Agency shall make grants in ranked order to eligible applicants under the procedures set forth in this Notice and the grant regulation 7 CFR 3570, subpart F.

Successful applicants will receive a letter in the mail containing instructions on requirements necessary to proceed with execution and performance of the award. This letter is not an authorization to begin performance. In addition, selected applicants will be requested to verify that components of the application have not changed at the time of selection and on the award date, if requested by the Agency.

The award is not approved until all information has been verified, and the awarding official of the Agency has signed Form RD 1940-1, "Request for Obligation of Funds" and the grant agreement.

Unsuccessful and ineligible applicants will receive written notification of their review and appeal rights.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements. Grantees will be required to do the following:

- (a) Execute a Grant Agreement.
- (b) Execute Form RD 1940-1.

(c) Use Form SF 270, "Request for Advance or Reimbursement" to request reimbursement. Provide receipts for expenditures, timesheets, and any other documentation to support the request for reimbursement.

(d) Provide financial status and project performance reports as set forth at 7 CFR 3570.276.

(e) Maintain a financial management system that is acceptable to the Agency.

(f) Ensure that records are maintained to document all activities and expenditures utilizing CF TAT grant funds and any matching funds, if applicable. Receipts for expenditures will be included in this documentation.

(g) Provide audits or financial information as set forth in 7 CFR 3570.277.

(h) Complete Form 400-4, "Assurance Agreement." Each prospective recipient must sign Form RD 400-4, Assurance Agreement, which assures USDA that the recipient is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 7 CFR part 15 and other Agency regulations. It also assures that no person will be discriminated against based on race, color or national origin, in regard to any program or activity for which the re-lender receives Federal financial assistance. Finally, it assures that nondiscrimination statements are in the recipient's advertisements and brochures.

(i) Collect and maintain data provided by ultimate recipients on race, sex, and national origin and ensure Ultimate Recipients collect and maintain this data. Race and ethnicity data will be collected in accordance with OMB Federal Register notice, "Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity," (62 FR 58782), October 30, 1997. Sex data will be collected in accordance with Title IX

of the Education Amendments of 1972. These items should not be submitted with the application but should be available upon request by the Agency.

(j) Provide a final performance report as set forth at 7 CFR 3570.276(a)(7).

(k) Identify and report any association or relationship with Rural Development employees.

(l) The applicant and the ultimate recipient must comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Executive Order 12250, Executive Order 13166 Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and 7 CFR part 1901, subpart E. The grantee must comply with policies, guidance, and requirements as described in the following applicable Code of Federal Regulations and any successor regulations:

(1) 2 CFR parts 200 and 400 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards).

(2) 2 CFR parts 417 and 180 (Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)).

(m) Form AD-3031, "Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants" must be signed by corporate applicants who receive an award under this Notice.

### 3. Reporting

Reporting requirements for this grant as set forth at 7 CFR 3570.276.

## VII. *Federal Awarding Agency Contact*

Contact the Rural Development state office in the state where the applicant's headquarters is located. A list of Rural Development State Offices can be found at: [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF\\_State\\_Office\\_Contacts.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF_State_Office_Contacts.pdf). For Applicants located in Washington DC, please contact Shirley Stevenson at (202) 205-9685 or via email at [Shirley.Stevenson@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:Shirley.Stevenson@wdc.usda.gov).

#### *VIII. 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, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, 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 responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at

[http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at 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) By mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Dated: April 18, 2018.

**Curtis M Anderson,**  
*Acting Administrator,*  
*Rural Housing Service.*

[FR Doc. 2018-09351 Filed: 5/2/2018 8:45 am; Publication Date: 5/3/2018]