

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Offers Grants for Programs to Create High-Wage Jobs and New Businesses in Underserved Rural Communities

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that USDA is accepting grant applications for community-driven programs that will help create high-wage jobs and new businesses in underserved rural communities.

The [Rural Innovation Stronger Economy \(RISE\)](#) program encourages regional, innovation-driven approaches to economic development by funding job accelerator partnerships in low-income and underserved rural communities.

For fiscal year 2024, the program is making approximately \$2 million available to partnerships of local governments, investors, industry, institutions of higher education, and other public and private entities in rural areas. The funding may be used to support innovation centers and job accelerator programs that improve the ability of distressed rural communities to create high-wage jobs, form new businesses, and identify and maximize local assets.

USDA encourages applications that serve the smallest communities with the lowest incomes. USDA is particularly interested in applications that will advance Biden-Harris Administration priorities to:

- Reduce climate pollution and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities.
- Ensure all rural residents have equitable access to Rural Development (RD) programs and benefits from RD-funded projects; and
- Help rural communities recover economically through more and better market opportunities and through improved infrastructure.

The deadline to submit applications is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, April 1, 2024. Applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](#). Potential applicants may submit a concept proposal for review by the agency to Grants.gov no later than 4:30 p.m. local time Feb. 1, 2024.

The minimum award amount per grant is \$500,000. The maximum award amount per grant is \$2 million.

For additional information, see page 43 of the Jan. 2, 2024, [Federal Register](#).

Applicants are encouraged to contact their nearest USDA [Rural Development State Office](#) ahead of the application deadline for more information about the program or the application process.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

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