



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Rural Development Announces Open Application Period for Ohio Rural Business Opportunity Grants

COLUMBUS, OHIO, Jan. 23, 2007 – USDA Rural Development announces the open application period for its Rural Business Opportunity Grant. The Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) Program is intended to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. Eligible applicants are public bodies, non-profit corporations, Indian tribes on Federal or State reservations and other federally recognized tribal groups and cooperatives with members that are primarily rural residents.

“We’re actively promoting this and other Rural Development programs as a way for communities to finance their economic development plans,” said State Director Randy Hunt. “These RBOGs are competitive funds so the more timely applicants are in getting their applications in the better their opportunity for approval.”

Recipients can use funds to identify and analyze business opportunities that will use local rural materials or human resources, provide technical assistance, establish business support centers, conduct economic development planning and conduct technology and leadership training.

In Ohio funds have been used for projects such as the development of a video conference training series for small businesses, conducting an asset mapping and survey process for two small communities, the deployment of a web portal that allows these communities and previous participants in the process to share information, and the creation of a business support center to assist new and expanding businesses.

In 2007, grants are limited to \$50,000 per application, except for multi-state projects which have a limit of \$150,000. Applications must be received by March 30, 2007. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis.

You will find the Federal Register Notice of Funding Availability at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/120806rbog.pdf>. For more information on the RBOG program go to <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbog.htm> on the web or contact Jennifer Sonnenberg at 614/255-2423 or jennifer.sonnenberg@oh.usda.gov.

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