
Connecting Rural America



*Distance Learning &
Telemedicine Program*

*Grant Application Guide
Fiscal Year 2011*

Rural Utilities Service
Rural Development
United States Department of Agriculture



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Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program

Administered under the Rural Utilities Service – a Rural Development Agency of the United States Department of Agriculture

Advanced telecommunications services play a vital role in the economic development, education and health care of rural Americans. The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program is specifically designed to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America through the use of advanced telecommunications technologies. With DLT grants, loans, and loan-grant combinations, we have helped rural communities enjoy enhanced educational opportunities, improved health care services and greater economic development.

Our partnership with rural America is long-standing. For 60 years, the Telecommunications Program has been at the forefront of providing the infrastructure financing that brought advanced telecommunications services to the most rural areas of our country. Today, the Telecommunications Program of the Rural Utilities Service continues as an essential source of financing and technical assistance for rural telecommunication systems. The DLT Grant Program strengthens that partnership and commitment by continuing to improve the quality of life for rural citizens.

Through its telecommunications infrastructure loan programs and DLT Program, we have helped build community partnerships that provide both the infrastructure needed to reach the schoolhouse or clinic door and the equipment required inside that door.

Your organization is to be commended for its interest in providing rural residents - students, teachers, parents, patients and physicians - with innovative and affordable educational and health care opportunities which were once available only in more urban areas. By submitting an application for financing under the DLT Program, you take a significant step toward improving the quality of life in rural America.

In this guide, you will find information on eligibility requirements; funding purposes and types of financial assistance; the how, when, and where to submit an application; and tips that will be useful in preparing your application.

Section I - General Information

This *Application Guide* will help you apply for a grant under the DLT Program. Where appropriate, the *Guide* includes suggestions and samples. Please note that the suggestions and samples are not a formula for a successful application. We urge you to use your unique understanding of your community and your project to prepare a compelling case for grant financing.

We endeavor to make this *Application Guide* a complete source of information on how to prepare a successful application and have designed it for the first-time applicant with no previous experience applying for grants. We hope that you will find it helpful.

A. Types of Financial Assistance

The DLT Program is legislatively authorized to provide three kinds of financial assistance.

1. 100% Grant
2. Combination Loan-Grant (no current Budget Authority)
3. 100% Loan (no current Budget Authority)

The eligible purposes for 100% grants are the most restrictive. More purposes are eligible under the combination loan-grant and even more are eligible for a 100% loan. This guide covers the application requirements for a 100% grant.

If your project includes purposes not eligible under the 100% grant program such as projects for Electronic Medical Records, please consider one of those financing options should funding be provided for them. However, at the time this document was prepared, the Agency has no Budget Authority to make Loans or Combos. Should that change in a future appropriations process, we will publish a Notice of Funds Availability in the Federal Register.

B. Fiscal Year 2011 Grant Funding

As of the date this document was prepared, the DLT Grant Program does not have an annual appropriation so the amount available for Grants is not known. Last year, the Program received an appropriation of approximately \$30 million. With respect to the size of awards, the maximum is \$500,000 and the minimum is \$50,000. There has been no budget authorization for the Combination Loan/Grant or Loan Programs for the last several years. Should funds be appropriated, Program levels would be announced at a later date in the Federal Register.

C. Who's Eligible?

To be eligible for a grant, your organization must:

1. Currently deliver or propose to deliver distance learning or telemedicine services for the term of the grant. To receive a grant, the purposes must meet the grant definition of distance learning and/or telemedicine. The DLT program is focused on sustainability. Planning studies, research projects, and short-term demonstration projects of less than life of the award (three years) will not be considered.
2. Be legally organized as an incorporated organization or partnership; an Indian tribe or tribal organization; a state or local unit of government; a consortium; or other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for profit or not-for profit basis with the legal capacity to contract with the United States Government. Specific legal definitions and citations can be found in 7 CFR 1703.103(a)(1) & 1703.125(k).

Note : Many applicants for DLT Grants are informal consortia (groups of legal entities such as school districts that are working together specifically for the purpose of the grant project but that do not have a separate existence as a consortium). For additional guidance about applying as a consortium, please turn to *Legal Eligibility* under Section IV-B.

3. Operate a rural community facility or deliver distance learning or telemedicine services to entities that operate a rural community facility or to residents of rural areas at rates calculated to ensure that the benefit of the financial assistance passes through to such entities or to residents of rural areas.

Note: Electric or telecommunications borrowers financed through the Utilities Programs of Rural Development are not eligible for grants, but are eligible for loans. See the *Loan and Combination Loan-Grant Application Guide* for more information.

D. Scoring Criteria

The DLT Grant Program is competitive. Applications are scored in **objective** and **subjective** categories. Objective criteria are generally straightforward indicators. Subjective criteria are comparative in the sense that the score of one application is based on comparison to other applications received that year.

For each category, these tables display the shorthand name in bold, a simple summary, and the maximum points available. Although the eight categories appear to add to a maximum score of 230, the maximum score that can actually be earned is 220 points. This is because the *Additional NSLP* points are available only to applicants who score 15 or fewer of the 35 points possible under the *NSLP* category. More detailed descriptions of the scoring categories can be found in Section IV of this *Application Guide*.

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Objective Criteria

| | |
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| Rural Area (<i>Rurality</i>) | This criterion measures rural benefit. To be eligible for a grant, the applicant must earn a minimum score of 20 points in this category based on Census data. (up to 45 Points) |
| Economic Need (<i>NSLP</i>) | This criterion measures the general economic need of the area through the use of statistics from the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). (up to 35 Points) |
| Matching Funds (<i>Leveraging</i>) | The DLT program requires a minimum match of 15%. Higher matches receive points. There are special matching provisions for American Samoa, Guam, Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands. (up to 35 Points) |
| Empowerment Zones (<i>EZ</i>) | This criterion awards points to projects located in a USDA Empowerment Zones. (up to 10 Points) |

Subjective Criteria

| | |
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| <i>Additional NSLP</i> | An applicant with an NSLP eligibility below 50% may request additional points based on a well-documented demonstration that the NSLP percentage is not an accurate indicator of the economic need of the area. (up to 10 Points) |
| Need for Services and Project Benefits (<i>Needs & Benefits</i>) | This criterion measures the specific needs of the community and how the proposed project will meet those needs, not the general need captured by the NSLP score. (up to 45 Points) |
| <i>Innovativeness</i> | This criterion assesses how the objectives of the proposed project are met in new and creative ways. (up to 15 Points) |
| <i>Cost Effectiveness</i> | This criterion evaluates the efficiency with which the proposed project delivers educational and/or medical benefits to beneficiaries. (up to 35 Points) |

E. Contacts & the Web

The DLT Program staff is available to answer questions about the application process and program requirements. In particular, and as described more thoroughly elsewhere in this *Guide*, we remind applicants that applications are evaluated for eligibility and score based on information submitted by the application deadline. We will not solicit or consider information submitted after the application deadline. If you have questions, the time to contact us with those questions is before you submit the application.

Contact us at:

Phone: 202-720-0413

Fax: 202-720-1051

Email: dltinfo@wdc.usda.gov

We post the latest DLT developments including the FY 2011 *Application Guide* : (Narrative, *Toolkit*, & Regulation) and *Notice of Funding Availability* on the DLT Resources Web page:

www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DLTResources.html

F. Freedom of Information Act

Should your organization win an award, your application must be made available to others if requested under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Under FOIA, some sensitive information is protected from release, but the balance is not. Costs to assemble and duplicate the material are charged to the entity that requests the information. If you provide any information in your application that you feel should be protected, please identify it, and provide justification for why it should be withheld. For more information about FOIA see:

www.da.usda.gov/foia.htm

It is our experience that the common motivation for obtaining a DLT application under FOIA is so that it can be used as a template. We do not believe that this is a productive approach to crafting a successful DLT application. Disregarding the cost of obtaining another applicant's grant under FOIA, which can be considerable, most of that application would be irrelevant as guidance to a prospective applicant. And while it might seem useful to see another's responses in the subjective scoring categories, the best scores in those categories are awarded for responses specific to the applicant's project.

Good applications do not spring from a template. As noted above, we endeavor to make this *Application Guide* a complete source of information on how to prepare a successful application and have designed it for the first-time applicant with no previous experience applying for grants. As an applicant, remember that no one knows your project and special circumstances as well as you. As a consequence, no one can do a better job of crafting an application than you.

Section II - Application Submission

A. DLT Program Regulation and FY 2011 Application Guide

The implementing regulation for the DLT Program is 7 CFR 1703, Subparts D through G (Part 1703) as supplemented by the FY 2011 Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA) and as elaborated upon in this *Application Guide*. The *FY 2011 Application Guide* is designed to be an easy-to-use version of Part 1703 and the NOSA.

Reminders and Process Changes for FY 2011

Application Preparation – In the Executive Summary (TAB C), we ask that you identify the grant writer, i.e., the person or organization responsible for preparing the application and the relationship of that writer to the applicant. For example, the writer may be a staff member of the applicant organization, a professional grant writer, or an equipment vendor. With respect to equipment vendors, we hear of applicants that make arrangements with vendors to prepare their application with the understanding that should the applicant win an award, the awardee will obtain its equipment from that vendor. Please be aware that we do not recognize and will not enforce such a *quid pro quo*. We expect awardees to purchase equipment that best meets the needs of their project at the best possible price. Vendors that choose to assist applicants with their application should understand that they do so at their own risk.

Contact Information - Certain aspects of the DLT competition may require you to respond to us by a deadline based on the date of our correspondence which we send to you by fax. We want to make it absolutely clear that the **fax will be sent to the contact person shown in block f of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance**, unless that block does not contain a fax number. In that case, the fax will be sent to the fax number of the person who signs the SF-424 as shown in block 21. If no fax number is provided, or if the contact fax number is changed without our being informed, correspondence will be sent by regular mail.

DUNS and Central Contractor Registration – Applicants have been required for several years to provide a DUNS number. Please make certain they are correct. Applicants are now required to register at the Central Contractor Registration site – www.ccr.gov.

Exact Site Location – It is important that we be able to locate your sites precisely. In cases where the applicant needs to identify a site by latitude and longitude, we have added an example of how to obtain those coordinates. See page 17.

Previous Awards – Discuss any DLT awards received in the previous two years (2009 & 2010 competitions) by the applicant or other participants in the project. See item 6 under “Telecommunications System Plan Details.”

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Eligible Purposes – Instructional Programming - There are three categories of eligible purposes under the DLT Grant Program and those purposes are described in detail elsewhere in this *Guide*. Under §1703.121 it is stated that “(g)rants shall be expended only for the costs associated with the initial capital assets associated with the project. In brief, the eligible purposes are (1) equipment, (2) instructional programming, and (3) technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment.

With respect to instructional programming, to be eligible, such programming must be an initial capital asset such as the cost associated with the first-time acquisition of reusable educational software related to the current project. Renewals of instructional programming will not be credited as an eligible match. Also, tuition, per-course charges, and fees for events such as field trips are expenses, not capital assets. As a consequence they are not eligible for grant funding and can not be credited as match.

Focus on Rural Areas - Applicants are reminded that the intent of the DLT Program as envisioned in the legislation establishing the Program and regulation which implements the Program (7 CFR 1703) is to benefit rural areas (20,000 or less). It is important to note that the definition of “end-user” in the regulation envisioned only rural facilities such as rural elementary, secondary, and other educational institutions; rural hospitals, primary care centers, or other rural community facilities. We encourage applicants to bear this in mind and limit their projects to rural end-users. While we recognize that applicants may desire to include urban (>20,000) end-users in their project, the Agency reserves the right to evaluate the benefit that flows to urban areas and adjust grant and match funds budgeted for the benefit of urban end-users when the urban benefit is either not necessary to serve rural areas or when the urban benefit is more than incidental to the benefit to rural end-users.

Internet Based Systems – From time to time, we receive applications from educational institutions that wish to provide a curriculum via the Internet. Frequently, the applicant will describe its “target” audience as students in rural areas. However, the offering is usually available over the Internet with beneficiaries that can be anywhere including urban areas. Such projects cannot be accurately scored for rural benefit (*Rurality*). While the intent may be to serve rural areas, if the area cannot be accurately scored because it is geographically undefined, we cannot consider it for funding. See Section IV, E-1 for more detail about measuring rural benefit and calculating your *Rurality* score.

Applications from a Consortium – Many of the applications we receive come from consortia. On occasion, the applicant is an existing established consortium with the legal ability to contract with the Federal Government. Such an organization can apply in the name of the formal consortium.

Far more common is an application from a group of legal entities that have joined solely for the purpose of a DLT project without creating a formal structure. When such an “informal consortium” wins an award, it leads to complications and delays in executing a grant agreement. An informal consortium that has no legal existence is not eligible to receive an award. **To reduce complications during the award process, we have provided additional guidance about legal eligibility and considerations when applying as a consortium.** You will find this guidance under Section IV-B, *Legal Eligibility*.

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NSLP – The instructions provided in previous years with respect to rounding did not precisely conform to the regulation. NSLP percentages should not be rounded. See Section E-2 for details.

In-Kind Matching – Last year we saw an increase of in-kind matches that could not be credited. Remember that the purposes for match and grant are identical and that to be credited an in-kind match must be integral to and necessary for the DLT project, not simply a technology purchase made in the same timeframe. See Section E-3 including the “special note” for details about in-kind matching.

EZ Designations – There have been changes with respect to USDA designations of Empowerment Zone, Enterprise Community, and Champion Community. See Section E-4 for details.

Other Changes - Each year, we adjust and amplify the *Application Guide* based on experience gained the previous year. This year is no different. For example, many applications come from informal consortia. In such cases, each member completes a set of Certifications under Tab H. Because this can create a large amount of paper, applicants may choose to supply a single set of certifications with the original copy of the application. In most respects, however, this *Guide* is quite similar to last year’s and includes no major process changes. Nevertheless, we encourage all applicants, even those who applied last year, to thoroughly review this year’s edition because there is additional useful guidance and information throughout. For those who may have applied several years ago and have found the guide changed from what they remember, the descriptions and justifications for the larger process changes as described in the FY 2006 and 2007 *Application Guides* can be found in an appendix at the back of this *Guide*.

B. FY 2011 Application Deadline – April 25, 2011

Applications are evaluated for eligibility and scored on information submitted by the application deadline. RUS will not solicit or consider eligibility and scoring information submitted after the deadline. All applications must either be delivered into our hands or carry third-party proof of shipping (or electronic submission, if applicable) by the application deadline to be eligible for funding consideration under the FY 2011 DLT program. **Applications will not be accepted by fax or e-mail. Late applications will be returned without being considered for funding.**

No Time Extensions – The Agency does not grant extensions to the grant application deadline under any circumstances.

C. How to Submit a Paper Application

Paper/Electronic Hybrid – We recognize that many applicants transcribe our forms into electronic form. This year we are providing the *DLT Toolkit* in Word as well as PDF. The Word version allows text to be entered. In addition, we are providing the *Budget Worksheets* in Excel. If you have prepared your *Budget* in Excel, we encourage you to copy electronic versions of your *Worksheets* onto a CD or DVD and attach them to your paper application.

Applications are to be presented in the format described in this Guide. Paper applications must either be delivered and in our hands by the application deadline or show proof-of-shipping **no later than the application deadline.** The proof-of-shipping must be from a third party such as the Postal Service or a commercial carrier. Evidence of shipping not under direct control of such a third party, such as a **printed label from a postage meter, does not constitute proof-of-shipping.** The following proofs are acceptable:

- A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark
- A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS
- A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier

Ship at least one copy with original signatures and two additional copies of your application to:

**Director, ASD
Telecommunications Program, STOP 1550, Room 2844
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-1550**

Note: Packages arriving at USDA via ordinary first-class mail (USPS) are irradiated, which can damage the contents. We encourage you to consider the impact of this procedure in selecting your shipping method.

D. How to Submit an Electronic Application

In past years, applicants attempting to use the Grants.gov website near the application deadline have experienced technical difficulties and delays. In conversations with these applicants, it has become clear that they believe that Rural Development prefers and gives preference to electronic applications. We want to assure applicants that our providing an online application method is intended as a convenience for applicants. Paper and electronic applications receive equal consideration and you should use the method you prefer.

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Paper/Electronic Hybrid – We recognize that many applicants are attracted to the on-line application process because they have transcribed our forms into electronic form and wish to submit them that way. This year we are providing the *DLT Toolkit* in Word as well as PDF. The Word version allows text to be entered. In addition, we are providing the *Budget Worksheets* in Excel. If you have prepared your *Budget* in Excel, and you wish to file a paper application, we encourage you to copy electronic versions of your *Worksheets* onto a CD or DVD and attach them to a paper application as described in the previous section.

Applications are to be presented in the format described in this *Guide*. You should be aware that the grants.gov site breaks your application into multiple files, which we must print and assemble. We ask that you identify each page of an electronic submission with a Tab identifier and page number, as if you were submitting a paper application, so that it is absolutely clear where you intended each page to go in the assembled application.

If you plan to use electronic submission close to the application deadline, we urge you to have an alternative plan for physical shipment of your application in the event you experience technical difficulties with the Grants.gov site. Delays caused by Grants.gov in accepting your application do not constitute a basis for submitting your application after the deadline.

We accept electronic applications submitted by the deadline though we may request original signatures on paper later. Use the Federal government's e-grants web site (Grants.gov):

www.grants.gov

Allow yourself plenty of time. **If you want to submit an application on-line, we strongly encourage you to obtain all the necessary sign-ups, credentials and authorizations well in advance of the application deadline.** You will need a Central Contractor Registry (CCR) registration before you can submit electronically. In addition, Grants.gov requires some one-time credentialing and online authentication procedures. These procedures may take several business days to complete.

Please follow the instructions at Grants.gov. If you experience a technical problem retrieving or submitting an electronic application, make the Grants.gov customer support resources your first stop (click the "Customer Support" tab on any page of Grants.gov to get started). Grants.gov is operated by a Federal Agency that is not part of the USDA. The DLT staff has no control of Grants.gov. Neither does it have specific knowledge of how the process works or ability to assist with technical problems.

Section III - Application Process

A. Review Process

We review each on-time application for completeness to determine whether it includes all items required by the regulation. If the application is complete, the applicant will be so informed.

Applications are evaluated for eligibility and scored on information submitted by the application deadline. Eligibility and scoring information submitted after the application deadline will not be solicited or considered. Applications that do not meet the minimum set of requirements as specified in the relevant rules (7 CFR 1703 and the 2011 Notice of Solicitation of Applications) and as elaborated upon throughout this *Guide* will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration along with a letter explaining the determination.

In cases where we have minor questions about an item, we may request clarification. Also, missing information not necessary for determining eligibility or scoring, but necessary for the award of a grant will be requested. In such cases, the applicant has fifteen calendar days to deliver a response to this request. If that response is satisfactory to the Agency, the applicant will be informed that its application is complete. If not, the application will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration.

B. Score Appeal Process

If your application is eligible for funding consideration, and upon completion of the scoring process, the Agency will notify you in writing of your preliminary score (Applications that are not eligible for funding consideration are not scored). We will also include an estimate of the minimum score necessary to receive a grant. We stress that this funding threshold score is an estimate that can go up or down depending on several factors including appeals (as described below) and budgetary factors that cannot be known with certainty at the time the estimated score is reported to you. If your preliminary score is below the threshold, it does not mean that you have been denied a grant. Conversely, if your score is above the threshold, it does not ensure that you will receive a grant.

As the applicant, you have the right to appeal your preliminary score. For an appeal to receive consideration, you must **deliver your written appeal into our hands within ten calendar days** of the date of our correspondence informing you of your preliminary score. Scoring appeals from anyone but the applicant cannot be considered. Also, we cannot consider information that was not part of the application as submitted by the deadline so do not submit such additional information in support of your appeal.

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Appeals of Objective Scores -To be successful, the applicant must demonstrate that the Agency made a scoring error based on the application as submitted by the deadline. In general, this means that the appeal of an objective score is more likely to result in a scoring change. This is because objective scoring is based on objective data. If the applicant can demonstrate an error on our part in evaluating the objective data in the application, the appeal will be successful.

Appeals of Subjective Scores - An applicant is free to appeal a subjective score, but it should be aware that such an appeal is much less likely to be successful. As the name suggests, subjective scores are based on the subjective reaction of our scoring teams to the supporting arguments made in the application. This means that if a project were scored by two teams, it would likely receive different scores because the process is subjective. That does not mean that one score is correct and the other incorrect. Just as in the review of a football play by the replay officials, it takes indisputable evidence to alter a scoring judgment made by the subjective reviewers. Not only are these scores subjective, they are relative, in the sense that each application is scored in comparison to other applications in the competition that year. This means that scores received in prior years for similar projects are not relevant. Without knowledge of how the other applicants in the current competition made their case and how the supporting documentation in your application compares to that submitted by others, it is difficult for an applicant to demonstrate scoring error on our part.

C. Grant Awards

Following the appeals process, we rank applications by their final scores. Applications are selected for funding based on scores, availability of funds, and 7 CFR 1703.127.

Regardless of the number of points your application receives, the Administrator may take any of the following actions:

1. Limit the number of applications selected for projects located in any one State during a fiscal year. (This authority allows the Administrator to limit awards to any one state. It does not allow the Administrator to make awards in other states regardless of score.)
2. Limit the number of selected applications for a particular project.
3. Select an application receiving fewer points than another application if there are insufficient funds during a particular funding period to select the higher scoring application. If the Administrator makes this kind of selection and it affects your application, we will provide you an opportunity to reduce the amount of your grant request to the amount of funds available.

Grant Agreement and Term – DLT grants have a term of 3 years and cannot be extended. A link to the standard form of DLT grant agreement can be found on the DLT Resources page at:

www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DLTResources.html

Section IV - The Complete Application

Tips:

- Before you begin to work on your application, read the entire *Application Guide* including the *Toolkit* so that you have an overall sense of what is expected.
- **An application that does not include each required item listed in this section cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration. An application that does not include required scoring information will be scored as is.**
- **Certain aspects of this competition may require you to respond to us by a deadline based on the date of our correspondence.** Response deadlines are not extendable under any circumstances. **Please make absolutely certain that you provide complete and accurate contact information in block f of the SF-424, *Application for Federal Assistance*, so that we can contact you promptly by fax rather than by conventional mail.** Also, should any of your contact information change after you submit your application, such as your address or contact person, please inform us of the change.
- It is important that the person who signs the Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*, documents his or her authority to do so. For example, the Director of Information Systems at a school may have the authority to obligate the school system, but in most cases, we have no means of confirming this authority, or even of determining if the title shown on the SF-424 is correct. Proper documentation is described in the instructions for Block 21, which you will find in the *Toolkit*.
- Use the 2011 *Grant Application Guide Toolkit (Toolkit)*. It contains all the forms, worksheets, and sample certifications that you will need to assemble your application. Do not ignore guidance on the worksheets. It is there to help ensure that you provide all the required information. Remember that with respect to information necessary for determining eligibility and scoring, we will not solicit or consider any such information that is submitted after the application deadline. In addition to being included with the printed version of the *Application Guide*, you can find the *Toolkit* at the DLT Web site.

www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DLTResources.html

- When you prepare your application, **try to imagine that you are the Agency reviewer** responsible for making certain that the competition is fair and that the federal funds designated for this program accomplish the goals of the program. In every section, **provide the level of detail and support that would satisfy you** if you were that reviewer. For example, reviewers are unlikely to have first-hand knowledge regarding your specific locale or circumstances so always provide source documentation to substantiate the information in your application.

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- Remember that scoring of the application is based in large part on who benefits. Do not, for example, try to make your project appear to have more rural impact either by excluding urban end-users that will benefit or by including rural sites at which the project will have a minimal impact. Pay careful attention to the sections in the application guide on apportioning benefit.
- Avoid upholstering your application with generic information concerning the value of distance learning or telemedicine (such as magazine articles and web page printouts unless they are specific to your area or project). We are well aware of how these technological solutions can benefit rural areas. Concentrate instead on the specifics of your project.
- Remember that only rural areas qualify for this program and other applicants will share the general characteristics of rural areas with you. You are not trying to distinguish yourself from the cities and the suburbs. Concentrate instead on the specifics of your rural area.
- **To be considered, information must be included under the proper Tab of your application (as described below in *Putting It All Together*).** Place all of the information supporting a scoring category together in the section of the application that responds to that category. **Applications are to be presented in the format described in this Guide.** Submit your application package in a properly tabbed three-ring binder. If you submit electronically, place the Tab identifier and page number on each page of the application, as if it were a physical application, so that we can assemble your application the way you intended.

A. Standard Form 424 and Attachments

SF-424

DUNS and Central Contractor Registration – Please make certain your DUNS number is correct. Applicants are now also required to register at the Federal Central Contractor Registration (CCR) site – www.ccr.gov.

The SF-424, (Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance* is required to apply for DLT grants. We use the version of the SF-424 prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-102. It carries a revision date of October 2005. We have reproduced the form and included a copy suitably adapted to paper applications in the *DLT Toolkit*. We combined the general instructions provided by OMB along with specific Agency instructions into one set, striking through the OMB instructions that do not apply to the DLT Program. These instructions follow the SF-424 in the *Toolkit*.

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Place the completed SF-424 under Tab A of your application, along with the *Site Worksheet* and voluntary survey described below. The worksheet and survey are also included in the *Toolkit*.

Important Note – The legal name of the applicant (SF 424, Block 8) must be consistent with the information provided under Tab B, *Legal Eligibility*. In particular, please note the additional guidance provided for consortia (a group of legal entities that have joined together for the purpose of a DLT project) in Section IV-B of this *Application Guide*.

Attachments to the SF-424

There are two attachments to the SF-424. One is a *Site Worksheet* (required) and the other is a *Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants* (optional). With regard to some of the information requested on the Site Worksheets, please note that the Census web site has a wealth of data beyond that described under E-1, *Rurality*, in Section IV of this guide. For example, the same mapping tool we instruct you to use to show Census Population Data can display school and congressional districts among many other things.

Site Worksheets - Complete identification of project sites is central to our ability to evaluate and score your project. The space provided for this information on the SF-424 is insufficient for DLT projects which by their nature generally involve multiple sites. We have created two *Site Worksheets* to provide extra space, one for traditional fixed-site projects (such as for schools or hospitals), the other for non-fixed sites, (such as a visiting nurse project).

You will attach the *Site Worksheet* appropriate to your type of project. The worksheets have been designed not only to provide additional space to respond to the information requested in Blocks 14, 15, & 16 of the SF-424, but also to link the project as described there directly and specifically to the project as described throughout the balance of the application package.

With regard to the application process, there is no administratively practical way to score a project that combines fixed, mobile, and non-fixed sites. As a consequence, we strongly recommend that applications are for one or the other. If you have such a situation, it is best to submit two applications. Otherwise, we will score each aspect separately and assign the lower score to the entire project.

Fixed Site Worksheet

If your project operates at fixed sites, you will use the *Fixed Site Worksheet* that is provided in the *Toolkit*. Complete that *Worksheet* and place it directly behind the SF-424 under Tab A of your application. Include every site involved with your project (*e.g.*, hub, hub/end-user or end-user) regardless of whether grant or match funds will be expended at that site or whether the sites are included in your estimated scores. **Applications that do not provide all of the site information requested on the *Site Worksheet*, and which do not use the set of sites described on that worksheet consistently throughout the application, cannot be evaluated or scored and, as a consequence, will be returned to the applicant as ineligible for funding consideration.**

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For each site (hub, hub/end-user, or end-user), show:

- The complete and formal name of the site. If you wish to use an abbreviation, show that abbreviation and use it consistently throughout the balance of the application.
- Positive Identification of the Site Location. As the applicant, you know where your sites are located. For us to verify your *Rurality* score, you must provide us with unambiguous evidence of that location. In some cases, the Census mapping tool will locate a site based on its street address. Data from the Census' *Fact Finder* website is required to document your estimated *Rurality* score. See "E-1 Rurality" in Section IV of this *Application Guide* for more detail about the *Fact Finder* site and about completing the *Rurality Worksheet*.

factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en

However, the Census mapping software does not provide a positive location in the way that other sites do, say, by placing a star at the address. Also, the Census site sometimes does not properly center the map on the address. That is why we ask you to place a copy of the census map in your application with a pen and ink entry of the site's exact location. When there is any doubt, consider supplementing the Census Map with one from Mapquest or Google Maps. Other maps from local governments can sometimes be useful supplements to the Census Map for positively identifying a site location.

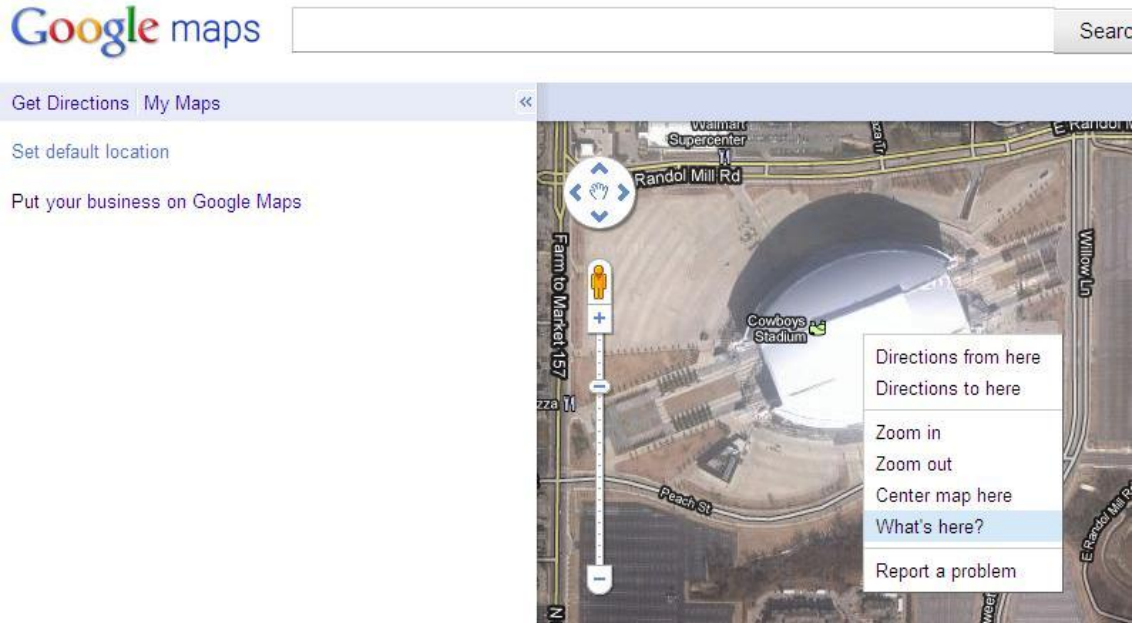
However, none of these resources are completely accurate or 100% current. For example, a new school may show up on the aerial view from Mapquest as a vacant field. If you cannot correctly, positively, and unambiguously identify a site location with one of these resources by address, provide us the latitude and longitude of the site location and explain any ambiguities. Latitude and longitude can be determined from GPS devices and mapping software as well as many publicly available sources including, for example, websites hosted by Mapquest and Microsoft. A summary of these resources is available at a Northern Arizona University website:

http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~cvm/latlon_find_location.html

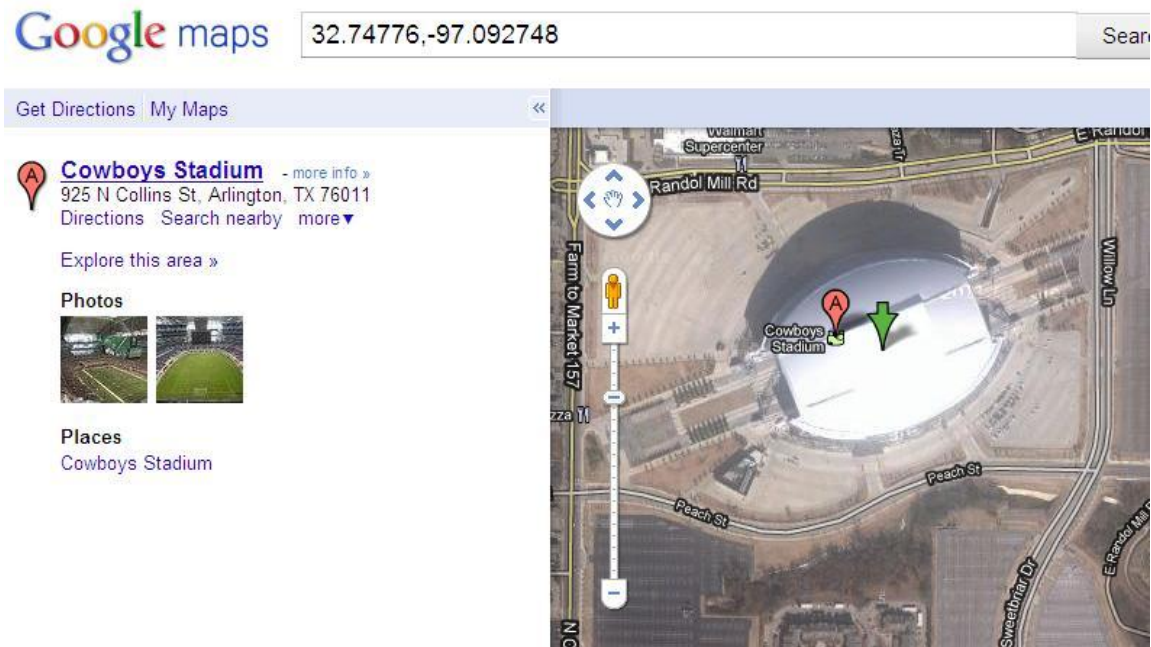
Remember, we must know the exact location of every site. If the only address you provide is a PO Box, Star Route, Rural Route, or other address not locatable on a map, you have not provided a verifiable site location.

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Finding Your Latitude and Longitude Example- Here is an example of determining your coordinates using Google Maps. Find your location on the map by zooming. We recommend using the satellite view that shows the structure such as a school or medical clinic. If the site does not appear in the view because it was constructed recently, explain the circumstances. In this example, we have used Dallas Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas. Place the cursor over the center of the stadium and right click. As shown below, a menu appears. Left click on “What’s here?”



As shown below, an arrow will be added to the map and the latitude and longitude (32.74776 North, 97.092748 West) of that point will appear in the search box.



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- The applicant’s designation of the type of site, *i.e.*, a pure hub, a combination hub/end-user, or a pure end-user. The distinction between a hub and a hub/end-user is important because pure hubs are not included in the *Rurality*, *NSLP*, or *EZ/EC* calculations. As a consequence, their inclusion or exclusion can have a significant effect on the applicant’s score. See D-1, Telecommunications System Plan & Scope of Work, in Section IV of this *Application Guide* for details on how to categorize sites in your application.
Remember that we start our review of an application with the presumption that most hubs are actually hub/end-users. To designate a site as a pure hub, the applicant must provide a convincing demonstration that no benefits flow to the site or to users at that site. The Agency will review the evidence provided by the applicant to determine whether the site is a pure hub or a combination hub/end-user. If the latter, we will include that site in the appropriate scoring categories. For this reason, we recommend that you provide population and NSLP data for every site including sites that you believe are pure Hubs so that we can correct these scores if necessary.
- The County, School District, and Congressional District in which the site is located.

Non-Fixed-Site Worksheet

If your project is for non-fixed sites like the service territory of a visiting nurse association, use the *Non-Fixed Site Worksheet*. Complete that *Worksheet* and place it directly behind the SF-424 under Tab A of your application. Non-fixed site projects are evaluated over the entire official service area. To be eligible for grant funding, a non-fixed site project must have an officially defined service territory that can be unambiguously represented on a map. **Applications that do not provide all of the service territory information requested on the *Site Worksheet*, and which do not show a consistent service territory throughout the application cannot be evaluated or scored and, as a consequence, will be returned to the applicant as ineligible for funding consideration.**

For the service area of the non-fixed site project:

- Provide a succinct, but thorough, narrative description of the territory in the space provided. Attach a map showing the official, defined boundary as described, for example, in the organization’s charter. (If your organization does not have a defined boundary, we cannot evaluate the *Rurality* score, which makes it impossible to determine eligibility.) In the past, applicants have not always provided sufficient information for us to evaluate their project. For example, some applicants provided hand drawn maps or vague word descriptions such as “most of County A and part of County B.” Just as with a physical site application, we must be able to precisely determine your service territory in order to verify your score. To do that, we need a precise and complete identification of your service territory.

Remember that this must be the official service territory to which your service offering is practically limited as demonstrated by public information such as a description in your organizing documents. For example, if your service is available worldwide on the Internet, you can not say that your “target” audience is limited to rural areas. Or if you serve all of Lakeview County as chartered by the County, and your website says you serve Lakeview County, the map of your service territory should reflect that you serve the entire County.

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- If the service is operated out of one service center, a hospital or ambulance garage, show the complete street address of this site. (The address must be one which can be verified as previously described above. See the bullet “Positive Identification of the Site Location” above under the heading “Fixed Site Worksheet” for information on providing this address.) If it is operated out of several centers, show the precise address of each such site and describe in the narrative whether the service territory is served jointly or is divided into specific autonomous regional operations. If the latter, show the service territory boundaries of each autonomous region.
- Show each County, School District, and Congressional District in the service territory that will be served by the grant project, whether in whole or in part.

Not-For-Profit Survey - The Federal government is committed to ensuring that all qualified applicants, small or large, non-religious or faith-based, have an equal opportunity to compete for Federal funding. In order for us to better understand the population of applicants for Federal Funds, we are asking not-for-profit private organizations (excluding public universities) to fill out a survey. You will find a copy of the Survey Form in the *Toolkit*. Place the completed form in a sealed enveloped behind the SF-424 and the appropriate *Site Worksheet* under Tab A of your application. Information provided on the survey will not be considered in any way in making funding decisions and will not be included in the Federal grants database. While your help in this data collection process is greatly appreciated, completion of the survey is voluntary.

B. Legal Eligibility - Legal Existence - Authority to Contract

Legal Eligibility Criteria

You must provide evidence with respect to your legal eligibility, legal existence, and legal authority to contract with The United States Government (See 7 CFR 1703):

1. **Legal Eligibility:** An applicant must be legally organized as an incorporated organization or partnership, an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (b) and (c), a state or local unit of government, a consortium, or other legal entity, including a private corporation organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis. **Evidence of tax status from the Internal Revenue Service or a state department of taxation is not evidence of legal eligibility.**
2. **Legal Existence:** You must provide us with acceptable evidence of your legal eligibility. Such evidence includes a certification as to legal existence from the Secretary of State in the applicant's state of incorporation, a certified copy of the applicant's Articles of Incorporation, or a copy of the state or local statute establishing an applicant. **Evidence of tax status from the Internal Revenue Service or a state department of taxation is not evidence of legal existence.**
3. **Legal Authority to Contract with United States Government:** You must provide written evidence of your legal authority to contract with the Federal Government. Such evidence includes a copy of the applicant's bylaws or Articles of Incorporation, applicable state or local statutes, a resolution from the applicant's board of directors, or an opinion of counsel showing that the applicant has the legal power to contract with the government. The provision of such a document in and of itself, a copy of the applicant's bylaws for example, does not provide evidence of the authority. The document text must make specific reference to the authority. Evidence of recent federal grants or other contracts with the federal government do provide this evidence. If a consortium lacks the legal capacity to contract, each individual entity must contract with RUS on its own behalf.

It is important that we know the exact name of the legal entity applying for the grant. For example, some applicants have provided evidence that a related entity such as the school board has legal authority to contract with the Federal government. Such evidence does not demonstrate the legal existence of the school district that is the applicant or of the school district's ability to contract with the government. **Applications that do not demonstrate both the applicant's legal existence as an entity that is eligible to apply for a grant and its legal authority to contract with the United States Government will be returned as ineligible.**

Use care in preparing your responses to the eligibility criteria shown above because the information goes directly to your eligibility to apply. This is especially true for an applicant whose legal name differs from its public name, whose legal name or status has changed in recent years, or who is applying as a consortium. Bear in mind that the applicant shown in block 8 of the SF 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*:

- must be legally eligible to receive the award, and
- must own and control items acquired under the grant.

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These considerations are particularly important if you are applying as a consortium. As defined in 7 CFR 1703, a consortium is a combination or group of entities formed to undertake the purposes for which the DLT award is requested. However, consortia can range in formality from an established legal entity to an *ad hoc* group with no collective identity. What concerns RUS is whether your consortium can contract with us. You should consult with your legal counsel to determine whether your consortium has the legal capacity to contract with the Federal government because it will have consequences should your application be chosen for an award.

- **Legal Ability to Contract with Federal Government** – If your consortium has this ability, the responses to the Eligibility Criteria above should be for the consortium as a legal entity, not for any of the various entities that comprise the consortium. Also, a copy of the consortium agreement should be provided with the application if such a document has been created.
- **No Legal Ability to Contract with Federal Government** – Some consortia, despite having a formal existence, cannot contract with the Federal Government. More common is an informal consortium or group of legal entities that have joined together primarily or solely for the purpose of a DLT Grant application without having a formal consortium identity.

When a consortium does not have the ability to contract with us, there are two possible approaches to applying and the applicant should be aware of what that means both for the application process and for the execution of a grant agreement should such a consortium receive an award.

1. **Apply under one Entity, not as a Consortium** – Under this approach, one entity would apply and the eligibility of the applicant would be based on that entity's legal eligibility. The consortium would not be considered. For example, if there are three hospitals (A, B & C) taking part in a DLT Project, Hospital A would apply as the legal entity with sole responsibility for executing the project.

Award Process - Bear in mind that if this approach is used, Hospital A would be the only party to the grant agreement and it would have to maintain ownership and control of everything acquired under the grant. Also, the Certifications submitted by Hospital A under Tab H would have to cover all sites in the project including the sites of Hospitals B and C. We have found that such an approach is usually unacceptable to all parties, in this case, to all three hospitals.

2. **Apply under a Lead Entity as a Consortium without Contract Authority** – Because it would be a burden to require applicants to go through the legal process of establishing a consortium that can contract with us simply to apply, we accept applications from less formal consortia. We do this with the understanding that should the applicant win an award, the consortium arrangement would be formalized in some manner at a later time.

Under this approach, the applicant submits its application under a consortium name/lead entity. The consortium would designate one member to be the lead entity and provide the eligibility criteria described below for that lead entity. If there are three hospitals (A, B, & C), they could apply as *Three Hospital Group/Hospital A*, where *Three Hospital Group* is the consortium name and Hospital A is the lead entity.

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Make certain that the lead entity meets the eligibility criteria described above because during the application process, the eligibility of the project's application will be based on the eligibility of that lead entity. For example, consider a project in which six public schools will join with two private schools, one of which is a single proprietorship. If this consortium were to choose the single proprietorship as the lead entity, the application would be ineligible for funding consideration because individual proprietorships are not eligible for DLT Grants. **Also, make certain that each entity submits a set of Certifications under Tab H.**

Award Process – Should a consortium without contract authority be selected for an award, there are two approaches possible for the execution of the grant documents.

- a. The consortium can establish itself as an entity with the legal capacity to contract with the Federal Government after the award is made. In such a case, the grant agreement would be executed with this newly created consortium. This is the recommended approach.
- b. Otherwise, each individual entity constituting the consortium must be a party to the grant agreement and those entities are jointly and severally responsible for the entire project. In practice, the grant agreement is signed and executed by each entity with the lead entity being responsible for requesting grant funds and reporting requirements. In effect, the grant agreement creates a temporary consortium specific to the DLT project.

C. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary gives reviewers their first overall view of the project area, the problems that residents face, and how the proposed project will address those problems. This is your opportunity to discuss the core aspects of the project. It should contain a **concise** description of the project including:

1. **A two paragraph abstract** that describes your project in a nutshell. Think of how you would describe it in a letter to your congressional representative or how you would want to see it described in the newspaper.
2. A general **overview** of the telecommunications system to be developed, including the types of equipment, technologies, and facilities proposed.
3. A description of the participating sites (hubs, hub/end-user, and end-user) or service territory (for non-fixed site projects) and the number of rural residents who will be served at each hub/end-user or end-user site. The sites (for fixed-site projects) or service territory (for non-fixed-site projects) must be consistent throughout your application including the SF-424, the *Telecommunications System Plan*, the *Budget*, the *Rurality Worksheet*, and the *NSLP Worksheet*. If your sites or service territory are not consistent throughout the application, your application will be returned as ineligible. See D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan & Scope of Work* in Section IV of this *Application Guide*, for extended discussion of how to categorize sites in your application.

DLT Grants cannot be awarded to projects that duplicate facilities. If any of the sites or service territory in the project as described in the application are part of another application in FY 2011 or were part of a project funded in the previous two DLT competitions (2009 & 2010), provide a

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brief description of the relationship between or among the projects. In particular, discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts.

Describe the status of previous projects and, in particular, the extent to which the funds have been drawn for eligible grant purposes. Provide a more thorough discussion of project overlaps in the *Telecommunications System Plan*, as described below. In the absence of an explanation, overlaps in projects are assumed to be duplication and as a consequence, proposed grant and match budget may be adjusted to remove such duplication.

4. A description of the **types of distance learning or telemedicine services** proposed and whether those services will be offered via a fixed-site project or to a service territory where the sites vary over time, such as a home health monitoring service. Remember that DLT projects must propose specific projects to provide distance learning and/or telemedicine to specific people. The DLT Program does not fund speculative proposals, i.e., the purchase of equipment or software whose function will be determined later.
5. An explanation of **how the project will address community needs, why your organization requires financial assistance**, and how the project **benefits rural residents**. A summary of the total project cost including a breakdown of the grant requested, the proposed match, and any other financial assistance required for purposes that are ineligible for grant or match but which you feel are necessary for the project.
6. An explanation of who produced the grant application and the relation of the grant writer to the applicant's organization. In other words, was the application prepared by applicant staff, an outside grant writer, an equipment vendor, or some other entity? With respect to equipment vendors, we hear of applicants that make arrangements with vendors to prepare their application with the understanding that should the applicant win an award, the awardee will obtain its equipment from that vendor. Please be aware that we do not recognize and will not enforce such a *quid pro quo*. We expect awardees to purchase equipment that best meets the needs of their project at the best possible price. Vendors that choose to assist applicants with their application should understand that they do so at their own risk.

D. Project Information

Eligible Grant Purposes are Identical to Eligible Match Purposes

In other words, to be considered as eligible matching funds, cash and in-kind contributions must go toward items which would be eligible for grant funding if included as part of a grant request.

All items to be funded with match or grant must be obtained from an organization other than the applicant or other entities participating in the applicant's DLT project as hubs, hub/end-users, or end-users, i.e., items must be procured from a third party. In the *Application Guides* of years prior to 2006, third party procurement explicitly applied to category 2 (acquiring instructional programming) and category 3 (technical assistance and instruction) items because it was in these categories that applicants had requested to provide the items themselves. However, the logic that leads to this restriction for category 2 & 3 items applies equally to category 1 (equipment).

There are a number of regulatory requirements that make this the only practical way to administer the DLT program:

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1. Salaries and administrative costs of the applicant are not an eligible purpose. If an applicant is also a vendor, it is administratively impossible to determine if the applicant's salaries and administrative costs are part of the vendor's selling price.
2. Items acquired before the application deadline are not eligible for grant or match. If the applicant is selling facilities to itself, we have no way to determine when the facilities were obtained.
3. Should a grant be made to an applicant, grant and match are administered on the basis of invoices from and purchase orders to third-party vendors. When the applicant obtains facilities from a third party, it is in the applicant's interest to obtain the lowest price and the invoice is evidence of the actual price. If the applicant is selling facilities to itself, we lose the assurance of reasonable pricing that third-party procurement provides.

Note: A vendor is eligible to participate in a DLT project either as the applicant or other participant. However, actual advances and reimbursements of grant funds, and crediting of matching funds, will be based on invoices submitted to the vendor from an entity not participating in the project - in other words, what the vendor pays for the equipment, not what it charges to others.

Eligible Purposes for Grant and Match

As you will see as you review the eligible purposes described below, the DLT Grant Program is primarily focused on providing equipment that operates via telecommunications to rural end-users of telemedicine and distance learning. It is useful to keep in mind that while the equipment is eligible, it does not fund the telecommunications that connects that equipment. In other words, it does not fund communications links between sites (wireless or wireline) and it does not fund telecommunications or Internet connections.

Remember that all equipment and services must be obtained from entities other than the applicant. By applicant, we mean the organization that signed the SF-424 and the organizations that have sites in the DLT project whether their participation is informal or part of a formal consortium.

Grants (and eligible matching funds) can be expended only for the costs associated with the initial capital assets associated with the project. This means that the capital assets must be new. For example, the renewal of an existing lease for equipment or educational programming would not be an eligible purpose. There are three categories of eligible purposes:

1. The first includes acquiring **eligible equipment for eligible purposes**. Acquisition can be by purchase or lease. If leased, the cost of the lease during the three year life of the grant is eligible. The following are examples of eligible equipment. This list is not exhaustive. Neither does it convey blanket eligibility. A computer is not automatically eligible. It must be used for an eligible purpose. Remember also that the purpose of the DLT Grant program is to deliver education or medicine between remote sites via telecommunications, not simply to furnish educational or medical technology. For example, applicants will sometimes argue that all proposed equipment is eligible because it is used 100% of the time to provide medical services. This is not always true. To be eligible, it must be providing medical services that meet the grant definition of telemedicine, *i.e.*, via telecommunications between remote sites, not within one facility.

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- Computer hardware and software
- Audio and video equipment
- Computer network components
- Terminal equipment
- Data terminal equipment
- Interactive audio/video equipment
- Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) or OEM authorized extended warranties on eligible equipment up to the 3 year life of the grant
- Inside wiring

In general, equipment not electronically interconnected to the grant and match funded equipment is not eligible. **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. (See D-1, Telecommunications System Plan & Scope of Work for more detail on apportioning DLT project benefit.)**

2. The second provides for **first-time** acquisition of **instructional programming** that is a capital asset (including the purchase or lease of instructional programming already on the market). Renewals of instructional programming are not eligible. Also, expenses (such as those for tuition, fees for coursework on a per course basis, or fees for cultural events or virtual field trips) are not capital assets. As such they are not eligible.
3. The third includes **technical assistance and instruction for using eligible equipment** (TA&I), including any related software; developing and modification of instructional programming that is a capital asset and providing engineering or environmental studies relating to the establishment or expansion of the phase of the project to be financed with the grant. The costs for **this category cannot exceed 10% of the grant amount requested or 10% of the eligible matching funds calculated separately.** For example, if your proposed category three match is in-kind, it is limited to 10% of the proposed in-kind match.

Ineligible Purposes for Grant or Match

None of the following purposes are eligible (see 7 CFR 1703.123):

- Salaries, wages, or employee benefits to medical or educational personnel.
- Salaries or administrative expenses of the applicant or the project including overhead costs. Administrative expenses of the applicant include the normal costs of operation. For example, software designed to keep track of student attendance or hospital billing is an administrative expense, not a function of distance learning or telemedicine. Another example is operational supplies such as paper, blank CDs, or spare ink cartridges. So is rental of space, the cost of utilities, and maintenance, except for OEM extended warranties as described above under eligible purposes. Some Federal grant programs allow a percentage of funding for overhead costs. This is not an eligible DLT purpose.

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- Acquiring, installing, or constructing telecommunications transmission facilities. DLT projects are intended to deliver education or medicine between remote sites via telecommunications, but they do not cover the transmissions facilities themselves. DLT eligible purposes end at the terminal equipment that connects to a transmission facility.
- Recurring or operating project expenses or costs such as fees for telecommunications, Internet, electric service, rent, or tuition. (Leases to obtain equipment as described above (under **Eligible Purposes for Grant and Match**) are not considered recurring costs.)

Each year applicants request funding for such things as wireless transmission systems or include costs for Internet Access or other types of “connectivity.” As the previous two bullets show, DLT Grants fund equipment that operates via telecommunications, but it does not fund the telecommunications itself, either through transmission equipment or purchased connectivity. These are not eligible purposes for grant or match.

- Medical equipment not having telemedicine as its principal and essential function.
- Purchasing equipment that will be owned by a local exchange carrier or another telecommunications service provider *unless* that service provider is the applicant. Remember that entities financed through loans from Rural Development Utilities Programs are not eligible for DLT grants.
- Duplicating facilities already in place which provide distance learning or telemedicine services.
- Reimbursing your organization or others for costs incurred prior to the date we received the completed application. For administrative convenience, we assume that date is the application deadline for this year’s program. Applicants can begin the acquisition process by placing an order after the application deadline. Should they win an award, they can be reimbursed for such acquisitions. However, items received after the deadline, but ordered before, are not eligible for reimbursement.
- DLT application preparation costs.
- Projects that only provide links between people located at the same physical facility. This includes projects where several facilities are involved, but all the links are within each facility. For projects that do not meet the DLT Grant Program definition of distance learning or telemedicine, organizations should consider the DLT Loan or the Combo Grant/Loan Program in the event these Loan Programs are funded. In the lending programs, the definition of Distance Learning and Telemedicine is less specific to the delivery of services via remote sites by telecommunications.
- Site development including destruction or alteration of buildings. Equipment specific modifications needed for the project to work such as soundproofing and lighting for a video conferencing room are eligible, although modern video-conferencing equipment does not require extensive room modifications. Building an addition, knocking out walls, or replacing an electric service are not.
- Purchasing land or buildings or for building construction.
- Projects located in areas covered by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act.
- Any other purposes not specifically contained in 7 CFR 1703.121.

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- Any other purpose that the Administrator has not specifically approved.
- **Except as otherwise provided in 7 CFR 1703.112, grant funds shall not be used to finance a project, in part, when success of the project is dependent upon the receipt of additional financial assistance under Part 1703, Subpart E, or is dependent upon the receipt of other funding that is not assured.**

Eligible Purposes – Special Discussion about Electronic Medical Records (EMR) and other technologies such as Picture Archive Communications System (PACS)

Because the subject of this discussion concerns telemedicine technologies, the following will be restricted to that subject, but similar principles govern our administration of distance learning technologies.

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Program is administered through three funding options – a 100% grant, a mixture of loan and grant, and a 100% loan. Each option is tailored to balance rural benefit and the cost to the government. In the 100% Grant Program, we have implemented the statutory guidance by strictly targeting them to projects that extend and improve the delivery of medical benefits into rural areas using the unique capabilities and efficiencies of telecommunications to link medical providers and patients who are not at the same facility.

We do this because it provides the greatest medical benefit to rural people through reduced travel time and access to services previously unavailable close to home, thus mitigating the effects of distance and low population density. Not every medical technology provides telemedicine as defined and implemented under the 100% Grant Program. Some technology improvements, such as replacements of physical records or analog technologies, do not meet the grant definition, or do so only in part.

In short, the focus is on the patient, not the provider. While we recognize that technology that benefits the doctor or hospital may trickle down to the rural person, we look for more direct benefit under the grant program to maximize the medical benefit delivered by each grant dollar. For example, we implemented the statutory direction not to fund “administrative expenses” of the applicant in the strictest sense. That is, we exclude from eligible grant and match purposes all facilities except those that are clearly and unambiguously for the purpose of medical care.

Also, in line with this targeting of grant funds to provide the greatest medical benefit to rural people, the 100% Grant Program specifically prohibits funding projects for communications within one site (which we refer to as “on campus” systems) because there is little direct benefit to the rural person. If that person had to drive to the site before the project was implemented, that person would still have to drive there after the project is built.

Electronic Medical Records - The fundamental purpose of electronic records is to replace physical records. The purpose of such records is, at least in part, for things such as billing and scheduling. EMR is marketed largely on this capability. Following the strict implementation of the statutory direction appropriate to the 100% Grant Program as described above, we consider billing and scheduling as examples of administrative functions of a medical facility, and therefore, an administrative expense of the applicant. As such, they are not eligible for funding under the 100% Grant Program.

In addition, the overwhelming use of EMR for medicine will be between a medical professional and a patient within the same facility and little will be for transfers of records taken at one

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facility so as to benefit a patient at another facility. It is of little benefit to a rural patient whether the records consulted by the medical professional are paper, electronic stored at that site, or electronic stored elsewhere, if they are collected and used at only one facility. This simply amounts to communications within a site, which is not an eligible purpose under the 100% Grant Program.

This is not to say that EMR never provides telemedicine or that we will never fund it under the Grant Program. We recognize that EMR allows for telemedicine to occur, such as when a patient visits an emergency facility that is not the usual place to which that patient goes for medical care. We also recognize that there will be growing use of EMR for telemedicine as time goes on. While EMR allows for telemedicine, it is unlikely that the use of EMR will ever be primarily for telemedicine as defined and implemented under the Grant Program, and we feel it would not be a prudent use of scarce grant funds, to fund in full or to credit in full as match, items which only provide a small percentage of such benefit when there are projects that do meet the grant definition and have a greater impact on improving rural lives.

The concerns about whether equipment meets the grant definition of telemedicine apply to other technologies. PACS and various technological replacements of earlier technology often have a predominant “on-campus” benefit. For example, when a hospital replaces its analog radiology facility to PACS, there may be little or no use that meets the grant definition of telemedicine because it is just a change from film to electronic storage with no medical benefit flowing through telecommunications to a remote site. Applicants must thoroughly address how their project will provide telemedicine that meets eligible purposes under the 100% Grant Program definition of telemedicine, not just medical care.

EMR Under the Grant Program - In 2011, entire EMR systems remain partially fundable based on a credible demonstration of the portion that meets the grant definition of telemedicine as described above and elsewhere in this guide. We also will consider funding specific pieces of EMR systems that provide service that meets the Grant Program definition.

EMR Under the Loan and Combo Programs – (At the time this document was prepared, there is no Budget Authority for the Loan and Combo Programs. Should that Authority be established, the Programs will be implemented as described here.) In FY 2011, entire EMR systems are fully eligible under the Combination Loan/Grant Program. This is partly because “on campus” facilities are an eligible purpose under the Combo Program. Also, we implement the DLT Loan Programs (Combo and 100% Loan) differently than the 100% Grant Program. In the Loan Programs, features that are not exclusively medical but that are indirectly related to and very useful in the delivery of medical care are not considered administrative costs of the applicant. Thus a feature such as scheduling is an eligible purpose under the Combo Program. Another feature of the Combo Program is that it is operated on a first-come, first-served basis, not as a competition. Because EMR is a better fit in the Combo Program, we will continue special grant provisions for EMR in the 2011 Combo Program.

In 2011, EMR system Combos will consist of \$1 of grant for every \$4 of loan (instead of \$1 of grant for every \$9 dollars of loan, as will be done in the balance of the Combo Program). In other words, twenty percent of the eligible project total funding can come from grant funds up to a maximum project of \$1 million (\$200,000 in grant, \$800,000 in loan). For more detail on this and other DLT loan programs, please refer to the *FY 2011 Loan and Combination Loan/Grant Application Guide*, which will be made available shortly after we publish the Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) in the Federal Register establishing the FY 2011 grant and loan amounts, assuming that the Agency receives Budget Authority for these Programs.

D-1. Telecommunications System Plan & Scope of Work

A Telecommunications System Plan (TSP) is required as part of a complete application. The TSP provides the reviewer with a thorough understanding of the project. The TSP in tandem with the *Budget* is the foundation of the application and should be prepared with great attention to detail. In particular, it shows the sites (hubs, hub/end-users, or end/users) that will participate in the project and shows where the equipment will be located. In addition, the TSP shows how the equipment is interconnected and how it accomplishes the distance learning or telemedicine purposes of the project. Before getting to the details of how to present your TSP and Scope of Work, we will address two subjects that are part of that process: Categorizing Sites and apportioning DLT Project Benefit.

Categorizing Sites and End-Users

Program Purposes – The clear intent of the DLT Program as envisioned in the legislation establishing the Program and regulation which implements the Program (7 CFR 1703) is to benefit rural areas (20,000 or less). Scoring is based in large part on the beneficiaries of the project, *i.e.*, the end-users. In particular, the *Rurality* and *NSLP* scores are directly tied to the end-users. It is important to note that the definition of “end-user” in the regulation envisioned only rural facilities such as rural elementary, secondary, and other educational institutions; rural hospitals, primary care centers, or other rural community facilities. We encourage applicants to bear this in mind and limit their projects to rural end-users. **While we recognize that applicants may desire to include urban (> 20,000) end-users in their project, the Agency reserves the right to evaluate the benefit that flows to urban areas and reduce grant and match funds budgeted for the benefit of urban end-users when that benefit is not necessary to benefit rural end-users or incidental to the benefit to rural end-users.**

It is important that the end-users on which the application is scored are an accurate representation of who will benefit from the grant and match funds.

Internet Delivery Systems – From time to time, we receive applications from educational institutions that wish to provide a curriculum via the Internet. Frequently, the applicant will describe its “target” audience as students in rural areas. However, if the offering will be generally available over the Internet, such projects cannot be accurately scored for rural benefit (*Rurality*) because the beneficiaries can be anywhere, not just in rural areas. While the intent may be to serve rural areas, if the area cannot be accurately scored because it is geographically undefined, the rural benefit cannot be measured, so we cannot consider it for funding.

Urban Sites - If grant or match funds will benefit an urban site, that site must be accounted for in the scoring and budget. This is true even if no grant or match funds are expended at the urban site, but the site benefits from grant or match funds expended elsewhere, say at a Hub facility that serves them. If you wish to exclude an urban site that will benefit from the project because of its potential to reduce a score, you will also need to remove any funds from the grant or match budget that benefit that site. Conversely, imagine an interconnected system of 30 sites, but where the proposed budget and project benefits will go to just four of those sites. Do not include the other 26 sites to gain a better score merely because they are interconnected.

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Tip – The *Rurality* score should be an accurate reflection of the rural benefit of the project. Do not attempt to improve your score by not mentioning urban sites that will benefit from your project or by including superfluous rural sites. If your organization has 20 locations, and you do not include them all in the scoring calculations, address why you chose not to include them. If you do not explain the exclusion, we cannot evaluate whether or not the scores generated by the sites you did include are an accurate reflection of the rural benefit of the project. By the same token, do not attempt to improve your score by including rural interconnected sites as end-users when the project benefit that accrues to those sites is minimal.

Remember, sites (for fixed site projects) and service territory (for non-fixed-site projects) must be consistent throughout your application including this section, the SF-424, the *Budget*, the *Rurality Worksheet*, and the *NSLP Worksheet*. If your sites or service territory are not consistent throughout the application, your application cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration.

HUB - A pure hub receives no benefit of any kind from the project. It is either an electronic connection point or it is exclusively a source of distance learning or telemedicine. Because no benefit flows to a pure hub, we do not include it in the *Rurality* and *NSLP* score. This can be important because Hubs are often located in urban areas.

However, most DLT project hubs are actually hub/end-users as described below and we start our evaluation of an application with that presumption. To be considered a pure hub, the applicant must address its designation of the pure Hub site and convincingly demonstrate that no benefit flows to the hub site or to users at the hub site. In the absence of such a demonstration, the Agency will make an independent determination and categorize the site based on our overall experience with similar projects. The following are examples of pure hubs, although the third example gives an illustration of a site that would not be funded in its entirety.

Pure Hub Examples:

1. A server is located in a school administration building. The server's entire function is to control distance learning equipment remotely located at each of 15 schools in the district. In other words, it serves as an electronic hub. In this case, the Administration building site is a pure hub. The Administration Building is excluded from the scoring and each of the 15 schools is scored as an end-user.
2. An urban school provides classes to five other schools that are shown as end-users on the *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets*. The urban school provides classes to students at the five schools but does not receive any courses from them. The DLT project items placed at the urban school are dedicated to the five rural schools in the project. No grant or match items are used at the urban school to provide courses to or receive courses from within the school or from schools that are not shown as part of the DLT project. The urban school is a pure hub. The five rural schools are scored as end-users on the *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets*.
3. A state operated Educational Resource Center serves students at all 804 public schools in the state. No students are served at the Resource Center itself. The applicant proposes to install video conferencing equipment at the Resource Center in order to provide distance learning to seven rural schools. If the applicant can demonstrate that the equipment at the Resource

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Center is dedicated to and will benefit only the seven schools shown as end-users, it would be an example of a pure hub. The *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets* would show the seven rural schools as end-users.

If, however, the Resource Center will use that equipment to provide distance learning to any of the other 797 schools which it serves, the seven schools shown on the scoring sheets as the end-users are not the sole beneficiaries of the grant. All sites that benefit from the project must be accounted for in the scoring and budget even if no funds are expended at some of those sites. If the applicant does not wish to include the other schools that will benefit from the DLT project investment at the Resource Center because of their negative effect on the applicant's score, it is possible that grant and match amounts for the equipment at the resource center can be adjusted in proportion to the usage that can be attributed to the seven rural schools included in the scoring. **See below for detail on apportioning DLT project benefit.**

Hub/End-User - A hub/end-user may perform functions associated with a hub such as electronic switching or origination of content, but it also receives benefit at that site. Hub/end-users are much more common in the DLT Program than pure hubs. A hub/end-user is considered the same as an end-user for scoring purposes. Remember that this program is intended for end-users in rural areas. If you include an urban hub/end-user in your project, the Agency reserves the right to evaluate the end-user benefit that flows to the urban area and may reduce grant and match funds budgeted for the benefit of urban end-users when that benefit is not necessary to benefit rural end-users or incidental to the benefit to rural end-users.

Hub/End-User Examples:

1. A university medical center wants to create a teleradiology system along with seven rural hospitals. The equipment at the university hospital will be used within the hospital and to connect with national centers of expertise for the benefit of patients at the university medical center and the seven rural hospitals. Because benefits flow to the university medical center, it is a hub/end-user and must be accounted for. We recommend that the applicant apportion the end-user benefit to the urban hospital and include funding at the urban site only for the hub function. In such a case, the site would not be included in the *Rurality* or *NSLP* calculation. **See below for detail on apportioning DLT project benefit.**
2. A suburban High School in an Urban Cluster of 12,000 houses the server that interconnects itself and three other schools. Video-conferencing equipment is installed at all four schools. The suburban high school and the three other schools both provide classes to and receive classes from other schools in the project. The *Rurality* and *NSLP* Calculations show four hub/end-user sites, the suburban high school and the three other schools.

End-User - An end-user is purely a beneficiary. Grant or match funds do not have to be expended at a site to make it an end-user for scoring purposes. If grant or match funds expended anywhere will benefit users at a site, that site must be accounted for in the scoring and budget. Again, this program is intended for end-users in rural areas. Urban end-users are not eligible for funding, but may need to be included in the scoring because of benefit they receive from funding elsewhere.

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End-User Examples:

1. A rural high school will receive foreign language and higher mathematics courses via video-conferencing equipment that is part of the DLT project. These courses will come from a larger high school that is a hub/end-user. The rural school will not provide any classes to others and is classified as a pure end-user.
2. An urban high school that is not included in the grant or match budget. If it will receive distance learning information via the DLT project which is the basis of the grant request, or if grant or match funded equipment will benefit this site, it must generally be shown as an end-user for scoring purposes. If the applicant does not wish to include this site because it would have an adverse effect on the applicant's score, it is possible that the grant and match amounts at other sites could be adjusted in proportion to usage by the end-users included in the scoring. **See below for more detail about apportioning DLT project benefit.**

Apportioning DLT Project Benefit

DLT Grants are intended to reduce the effects of low population density and lack of economic resources by using telecommunications to bring education and medical services to rural areas. In short, the focus is on students and patients in rural areas, not on teachers and doctors or institutional administrators. The scoring system (*Rurality* and *NSLP* in particular) is intended to measure the benefit of the project to rural people by using population and economic characteristics of the end-user sites where the service is provided as a proxy for the rural people the project is designed to benefit. As part of our review of the application, we must make certain that the project actually provides distance learning and/or telemedicine and that the end-users on which the scores are calculated are an accurate representation of who will benefit from the project. If sites not included in the scoring benefit from the project, they must be accounted for in some manner so that the funding considered for grant and match is proportional to the benefit that goes to the sites on which the application is scored.

For a line-item to be eligible in full for grant or match funding, the application must demonstrate that:

1. None of the use is for ineligible purposes,
2. None of the use is to benefit sites not accounted for in the scoring, and
3. The predominant purpose (over 50% of use) of that line-item is for purposes that meet the DLT Grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine.

If any part of a line-item is for an ineligible purpose, the line-item cannot be budgeted for grant or match. If not the predominant purpose (over 50% of use) or if some of the use will benefit sites not included in the scoring, the applicant can propose that a portion of the line-item be budgeted for grant and/or match. That portion eligible for grant or match is that attributable to the sites on which the project is scored. The balance must come from other funds.

Apportioning Illustrations: How does apportioning benefit work in practice?

Illustration 1 - No Apportioning Needed: In many cases, there will be no need to apportion. Imagine a typical distance learning system in which ten rural schools are equipped with video conferencing classrooms so that they can all exchange classes with each other. None of the video conferencing equipment is used for communications within the school. All the equipment is used for distance learning, *i.e.*, transmitting and receiving classes via telecommunications to

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and from one of the other schools in the project and none is used to connect to schools not shown as end-users. All ten schools are scored as hub/end-users on the *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets*. The DLT percentage of use of the video-conferencing equipment is 100% for distance learning.

Illustration 2 - Ineligible Purposes: Other cases are not so straightforward. Grant and Match funds cannot be used in the DLT Program to fund ineligible purposes. For example, Internet connectivity is not an eligible purpose so it must always be shown as zero percent DLT, regardless of the percentage of time it is used by rural students. Bundling an ineligible purpose with an eligible purpose does not change this. For example, a medical software package might bundle billing and insurance functions along with functions that can be used to provide telemedicine. Administrative costs of the applicant (billing and insurance) are not eligible purposes (**See eligible and ineligible purposes under D, Project Information, in Section IV of this Guide**). In cases like this, have the vendor apportion (break out) the costs of eligible and ineligible purposes so that you can show them as a separate line-items in the budget. The line-item for ineligible purposes must come from other funds - not grant or match.

The apportionment must be reasonable. If a software bundle provides thirty functions, and only one is a DLT eligible purpose, it is not reasonable to suggest that 100% of the cost of the bundle is for the one eligible purpose. The Agency will review the apportionment for reasonableness and may adjust it based on its experience with similar systems. If breakout pricing to apportion the ineligible purposes is not provided, the entire line-item is ineligible and must come from other funds.

Illustration 3 - Purposes that are Neither Eligible Nor Ineligible: In some cases, a portion of a line-item is for a purpose that while not specifically ineligible, does not meet the DLT Grant Program definition of distance learning. Consider a computer that is integrated into a distance learning classroom system. Imagine that it is used 55% of the time for distance learning and 45% of the time for ordinary Internet access and local use such as word processing. This computer has a predominant use of distance learning. The balance of use, Internet access and word processing, does not meet the DLT Grant definition of distance learning, but it is not specifically ineligible. In this case, because the predominant use is for distance learning, the entire computer would be eligible in the grant or match budget.

However, schools routinely purchase large numbers of computers for general use. While connected to the Internet, they may not be integrated into the distance learning functions of the DLT project in any way. In such a case, none of the computer's use can be attributed to distance learning so none of the computer's cost can be included in the grant or match budget. In other cases, the predominant use of the computer is not for distance learning. If a computer is used 5% of the time for distance learning, it is not a good use of scarce grant funds to fund it in its entirety or to consider the entire computer an eligible match. In this case, only the portion attributable to DLT use (5%) is eligible for grant or match. The balance must come from other funds.

DLT % of Use - Reasonable Basis for Apportioning:

The sample budget forms include a column for the applicant to enter the *DLT % of Use*. The percentage entered in this column is to reflect the portion of use that is attributable to eligible DLT Grant purposes of the project, not simply to education or medicine. In other words, if an applicant enters 100% in this column, it is claiming that the item is for a purpose that is 100% eligible, i.e., it is solely for either distance learning or telemedicine between remote sites via telecommunications as discussed above.

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The applicant may choose any reasonable method to demonstrate usage, **but this is important, it must demonstrate the basis for that usage, not merely assert it. If an applicant does not address how the percentage was determined, or does not provide a reasonable and satisfactory demonstration, it can expect the Agency to adjust the percentage based on our experience with similar items.** Among the bases for apportioning use would be time of usage or numbers of users. However, as with apportionment of ineligible purposes discussed above, the basis for apportionment must be demonstrated and must be reasonable.

Illustration 4: Consider this hypothetical example. Imagine a type of educational project where every student and teacher is electronically connected to every other student and teacher. Assume that the educational information that flows between students and teachers would meet the definition of distance learning if each student were at a separate site connected through telecommunications. An urban school plans to install this system to serve its 2,000 students at one site. Because it is a single site system that does not connect remote sites via telecommunications, it would not meet the DLT Grant Program definition of distance learning.

If the urban school were to connect 20 rural students at one rural school to their system via telecommunications, the project would acquire a distance learning component. Based on the number of students ($20 \div 2,020 = 0.01$), it would be reasonable to attribute 1% of the investment at the urban school to distance learning and that amount would be eligible for grant or match. The balance would have to come from other funds. If the applicant demonstrated that the rural students will use the system twice as much as the urban students, it would be reasonable based on usage to attribute 2% of the urban site equipment to distance learning. In this case, 2% of the investment at the urban school would be eligible as grant or match. It would not be reasonable to attribute 100% of the equipment at the urban school as benefiting the 20 rural students and seek to fund 100% of the urban school equipment with grant or match.

The situation would be the same for an urban medical center that installs an in-hospital system. A one-site system does not meet the Grant Program definition of telemedicine. If it were to connect one rural clinic, it would add a telemedicine component. If 100 medical professionals use the system within the hospital and only one uses it from the rural clinic, it would be reasonable to attribute 1% of the equipment at the hospital to telemedicine. It would not be reasonable to attribute 100% of the equipment at the hospital as benefiting the one rural clinic and seek to fund 100% of the hospital equipment with grant or match.

Telecommunications System Plan Details

The TSP will aid the Agency in comprehending and evaluating your project. It is crucial that the TSP provide the information in the numbered items below. Keep in mind that the eligible purposes for grant and match are identical and the support information you provide here and elsewhere in the application should be just as thorough and complete whether for items in your grant request or in your proposed match. Remember also, that your application is evaluated for eligibility and scored based on the material submitted by the deadline. Additional information and clarifications not provided as part of the application as received by the deadline will not be solicited or considered by the Agency.

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Number and organize your TSP Details as shown below. Include the following:

1. A description of the types of distance learning and telemedicine services proposed and a statement that the project is either for a distance learning or telemedicine purpose. Describe how the project as a whole meets the regulatory definition of distance learning and telemedicine. If the project provides both distance learning and telemedicine services, identify the predominant use of the system.

Remember that **distance learning** as defined by the regulation implies a curriculum with measurable results delivered via telecommunications and stresses the connection of students and teachers at remote sites. Not every use of technology is distance learning. Some examples of technology that in isolation are not distance learning include:

- General computer and whiteboard acquisitions. Computers and whiteboards are becoming ubiquitous general use appliances. For example, it is increasingly common that schools attempt to provide every student a computer, regardless of whether that school has any distance learning in their curriculum. General equipment acquisitions cannot be automatically considered distance learning equipment.
- Wireless connectivity. As with computers, many schools are now installing wireless connectivity. These systems are generally used for internal communications within a facility, not for distance learning. As such they would not be eligible for grant or match funding.
- Attendance software. Attendance is an administrative function. Administrative costs are not an eligible purpose.
- Ordinary access to the Internet, *i.e.*, not part of a structured curriculum obtained via the Internet. Giving a student access to the Internet for “research” is not distance learning any more than giving them access to the library is formal education. The e-rate program is targeted directly at the goal of wiring schools and connecting them to the Internet. The DLT Program is focused on connecting students and teachers at remote locations.
- Providing classroom video monitors that could potentially be used for distance learning throughout a school, but without a demonstration in the application that the applicant has a specific and coherent plan on how to do so.
- Providing computers for word processing, homework, or for improving a student’s “technical literacy.” These are all worthy goals, but they do not meet the Grant Program definition of distance learning.
- Video-streaming of archived classes recorded at one school and viewed at the same school on a server located at that school. Video streaming of archived material can be a valuable adjunct to a distance learning system, but in isolation it is not distance learning because the transfer does not involve telecommunications between sites. In essence, this is like looking at a video tape, which is not distance learning.

Telemedicine as defined by the regulation implies the delivery of medicine from medical professionals at one site to patients and their medical professionals at other sites via telecommunications. Telemedicine should reflect some benefit to rural residents either in reduced travel time or access to services not otherwise available. If before the technology is

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installed, the patient visits the doctor's office in a hospital for a consultation, and after the technology is installed, the patient still visits the same doctor's office for a consultation, and the technology doesn't provide any delivery of additional medicine from a remote site, your project doesn't provide any telemedicine or benefit to the rural resident. Some examples that in isolation are not telemedicine include:

- A computerized patient billing system where the physician and patient are at the same site. This fails on two counts. First, the billing system does not deliver medicine. It is an administrative function and administrative costs are not an eligible purpose. Second, even if this function were eligible, the interaction is between doctor and patient at the same site. It is a matter of indifference to the patient whether the billing is manual or electronic. There is no medical benefit delivered to the rural resident in terms of reduced travel time or access to previously unavailable services that occurs through telecommunications.
 - Wireless connectivity. This is generally used for internal communications within a facility, not for telemedicine.
 - General Technology Improvements - Many technology improvements can have an internal or telemedicine use. For example, Electronic Intensive Care Units are being installed both at rural hospitals for remote monitoring, and at urban hospitals for internal use. The former would be eligible, the latter would not.
 - Equipment not electronically interconnected with the equipment that comprises the telemedicine project. For example, a portable computer used for data entry by a medical professional at a patient's home and carried back to another point where the data is transferred to another system. No telemedicine occurs at the home because there is no telecommunications link out of the home.
 - Connecting physicians at home so they can attend to paperwork or consult records, but not for use in delivery of medicine from that site to another.
2. A general description of the telecommunications facilities proposed for the project including an explanation of how they will enable the project's interconnection with other networks, if that is relevant. This discussion should cover the entire project, including interconnected sites for which no grant or match funds are budgeted. The discussion should be sufficiently straightforward that a reasonably intelligent but non-expert person would understand how your project delivers distance learning or telemedicine across the system and would also be capable of explaining that operation to another person.
 3. **A map and/or a network diagram of the telecommunications system, and how the distance learning or telemedicine equipment relates to that system.** For fixed site projects, each site must be represented on the map/diagram. This representation need not be to scale, but it must be representational of your project, not generic. **An application that does not contain a map/diagram that shows each site cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration.** For non-fixed sites projects, the applicant is to provide a map of its official service territory as part of the *Site Worksheet* under Tab A. Remember that this must be the official service territory as demonstrated by public information. If you serve all of Lakeview County as chartered by the County, do not provide a map showing that you serve only part of that County. If you offer your service to the entire United States, do not provide a map showing that you serve only the rural portions.

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4. A list that can be cross referenced with the map/diagram and the *Budget* of every line-item in the *Budget*. Provide detailed descriptions of each line-item in the list. Both here and in the *Budget*, make certain that the line-items are specific, not lump sums that cannot be evaluated by us as to eligibility or reasonableness of cost. Provide specifics such as the brand and model number, *i.e.*, “VideoKing TX-90,” as opposed to “One Video System.” Provide detail about items such as “installation,” “interfacing,” “integration”, “programming,” or other generic terms that convey no specific information about what is being proposed. **An application that does not include this list and detail cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration.**

Include the following detail for each line-item:

- **The percentage of use that can be attributed to purposes that meet the DLT grant definition of distance learning and/or telemedicine and a demonstration of how those percentages were determined.** Both here and in the *Budget*, for any portion of the item to be eligible as grant or match, the DLT percentage of use must be greater-than-zero. In particular, all items for ineligible purposes are to be shown with a DLT % of use of zero percent because ineligible items are never eligible for grant or match. (**See page above for more detail about apportioning DLT project benefit. This percentage is entered on the Overall Budget Worksheet which is discussed below.** Examples are also provided in the *Budget* section.) Remember that to be eligible in full for either grant or match, the predominant use of each line-item must be for distance learning and/or telemedicine and none of the use can be for ineligible purposes. If the line-item will provide any ineligible purpose, no portion of the line-item can be funded with match or grant. For items that provide no ineligible purposes, but where the predominant use does not meet the DLT Grant Program definition of distance learning or telemedicine, only the portion attributable to DLT purposes is eligible for grant or match. The balance must come from other funds.
 - The DLT capabilities of all equipment and software that will be provided.
 - Information which supports the costs shown in the budget such as vendor quotations. Quotes from multiple sources are recommended and such information is valuable in preparing the *Cost Effectiveness* section (Tab F-4). Include discussion of how the budgetary cost estimates were determined to be reasonable, when the equipment will be obtained, and whether it will be purchased or leased.
5. Documentation of discussions with various technical sources, such as consultants, engineers, product vendors or internal technical experts. Provide detailed cost estimates for operating and maintaining the end-user equipment. Provide evidence that you evaluated alternative equipment and technologies. These types of documentation will also be useful in the *Cost Effectiveness* Category.
 6. A discussion of whether the project will duplicate any adequate, established telemedicine or distance learning services. As part of the application package, you will need to complete a *Nonduplication of Services* Certificate, which is part of the *Toolkit*. Applications submitted without a certification of nonduplication will be returned as ineligible.

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Previous Grants - In particular, thoroughly discuss any DLT grants received from our Agency in the previous two grant cycles (2009 & 2010) and how they would affect the project proposed in the current application. This applies not only to prior grants received by the current applicant, but to grant funding that may have gone to any of the end-users in the current proposal via a grant received by another entity. Specifically address the progress of any previous awards and the extent of grant and match funds expended toward completing those projects.

Current Applications - In addition, discuss whether any of the sites in the current project are included as participants in another application for a Fiscal Year 2011 DLT Grant.

In the absence of a thorough explanation, overlaps in projects are assumed to be duplication and as a consequence, proposed grant and match budget may be adjusted to remove such duplication.

7. A description of the consultations with the appropriate telecommunications carriers (including interexchange carriers, cable television operators, enhanced service providers, providers of satellite services and telecommunications equipment manufacturers and distributors) and the anticipated role of such providers in the proposed telecommunications system.

Scope of Work

The scope of work explains what you plan to do. It is your opportunity to make a clear and convincing presentation of how you will achieve the goals of your project. The scope of work completes the picture for the reviewer. It discusses how your organization proposes to proceed with the project, if funded. **An application that does not include a scope of work cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible.** The scope of work must include, *at a minimum*, the following:

- The **specific activities** to be performed under the project.
- **Who** will carry out the activities.
- The **timeframes** for accomplishing the project objectives and activities.

D-2. Budget

Note: The purposes for grant and match are identical and the support information you provide here and elsewhere in the application should be just as thorough and complete whether for items in your grant request or in your proposed match. Remember also, that your application is evaluated for eligibility and scored based on the material submitted by the deadline. Additional information and clarifications not provided as part of the application as received by the deadline will not be solicited or considered by the Agency.

A budget is required. In tandem with the TSP discussed above, the budget is the foundation of your application and should be prepared with great attention to detail. This section shows how to present a budget for your organization's proposed project. Your *Budget* should show each cost as a **line-item** similar to the sample below. **Both here and in the *Telecommunications System Plan*, make certain that the line-items provide item-by-item detail. Do not enter lump sums**

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that cannot be evaluated by us as to eligibility or reasonableness of cost. Provide detail such as the brand and model number, *i.e.*, “VideoKing TX-90, \$5,600,” as opposed to “One Video System, \$75,000 each site;” Installation,” \$50,000; or “Wiring, \$100,000.” Remember that we evaluate the entire project so show each site in the *Budget* whether it will be funded with the grant, matching funds, or other funds. Even if a site does not need any funding, enter a placeholder in the *Budget* so that it is clearly identified as part of the project.

As is discussed more thoroughly in **E-3, *Leveraging, in Section IV of this Guide***, we recommend that applicants propose cash matches and avoid in-kind matches. Cash matches are unambiguous as to value and can be applied against any eligible item in the entire budget. An in-kind match is harder to value and is specific to the in-kind item proposed. If the applicant cannot demonstrate that the item has an established monetary value or if the item is determined to be ineligible, the proposed match disappears when that item is removed from the grant and match budget.

As a practical matter, there is no compelling reason for an applicant to propose an in-kind match. Any in-kind items will generally be obtained by the applicant with cash after the application is submitted. In other words, when an applicant proposes an in-kind match, it is in effect committing cash with which the proposed in-kind item will be purchased at some point after the application deadline. However, by proposing a specific in-kind item rather than cash, the existence of the match is tied to the eligibility of that item. If that item is not eligible, either categorically or because the Agency finds that it is not integral to eligible DLT purposes as described in the application, the item would be removed from the budget and the proposed match associated with that item disappears. This would reduce the proposed match which can affect the *Leveraging* score and could even make an application ineligible, should the remaining match not meet the 15% minimum required under the DLT Program.

Tip - Describing a match for a specific item as a cash match does not make it so. **If matching documentation specifies to which line-items the match must be applied, that proposed match is in-kind, not cash.** As such, it should be entered on the *In-Kind Match Worksheet* described below. Remember that the crediting of a proposed in-kind match is dependent on the eligibility of that line-item as discussed above.

Of course, projects typically require resources that are not eligible (see page 20 for a list of ineligible purposes) for grant or match funding and, as a result, are not part of the eligible costs described above. Costs incurred by your organization or contributed by others for ineligible purposes typically include salaries, rent, fringe benefits, supplies, office space, Internet access charges, utility expenses and other recurring charges. If shown at all, these should be shown in full on both the *Overall Budget Worksheet* and the *Other Funds Worksheet*. Budget worksheets are described below.

Budget Worksheets - The *Toolkit* provides three budget worksheets:

Overall Budget Worksheet: Show the entire project budget on this sheet in line-item form. Include every line-item that will be part of the project regardless of the source of funds. In other words, this sheet will show every aspect of the project, whether it is funded by the grant, by matching funds, or by other funds.

Number each line-item in the first column. **To assist us in our review, we ask that when you show these line-items on other worksheets, you use the same line-item number rather than**

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numbering each sheet independently. For example, you may show 100 line-items on the *Overall Budget Worksheet*. If line-items 9, 11, & 15 on that sheet are proposed as an in-kind match, show them as line-items 9, 11, & 15 on the *In-Kind Match Worksheet*.

For each line-item, identify the site where the item will be placed. Provide a description, a unit cost, the number of units, and the extended cost. In the last column, *DLT % of use*, enter the percentage of use that is attributable to purposes that meet the DLT Grant Program definition of distance learning and/or telemedicine. Remember, this column is for use of eligible equipment that meets the grant definition, not simply how much it will be used. **This percentage must be developed and supported in the TSP. Undocumented assertions of use cannot be evaluated as to eligibility by the Agency and can result in the item being moved to the *Other Funds Worksheet*.** All ineligible purposes are shown as zero % in the “DLT % of Use” column. Also, otherwise eligible items for which no grant funds are requested or which are not proposed as match are also shown as zero % in the “DLT % of Use” column. See below for detail about apportioning DLT project benefit. Examples are also provided.

At the bottom of the sheet is a block labeled *Budget Summary*. Line A, *Overall DLT Project Budget*, is the total project budget. The number entered here should match the number entered in Block 18g of the SF-424, *Application for Federal Assistance*.

In-kind Match Worksheet: Before proposing an in-kind match, we strongly recommend you review the discussion about in-kind matching in Section IV, E-3. If any in-kind match items are proposed, show them on this sheet. This includes any specific items identified in the match documentation letter. Listing specific items makes them a proposed in-kind match, regardless of whether they are represented in that letter as a cash match. If you truly wish to propose a cash match that can be applied against any eligible purpose, do not specify the items to which you want the funds to apply. Remember to identify each line-item in the same manner as on the *Overall Budget Worksheet* (line-item number, site, description, etc.).

Special Note About In-Kind Matches

Last year we saw a significant increase of in-kind match proposals, no doubt due to pressure on budgets caused by the economic downturn. The purpose of matching funds in a competition is to encourage something that would not otherwise occur, not to give an unfair competitive advantage to entities that routinely make technology purchases over entities that do not. We scrutinize in-kind matches carefully to ensure they are credible and integral parts of the grant project. As is discussed in Section IV, E-3, there is no benefit to the applicant in proposing an in-kind match unless it is something that the applicant is already planning on purchasing for another purpose, in which case it is difficult to make the case that the purchase is an integral part of the grant project. The proposed in-kind matches we see are usually general technology purchases of items we do not tend to find in applications from those that propose a cash match. They appear to be compiled by examining planned technology budgets and proposing anything that can possibly be construed as having some connection to the project. In most cases, we do not credit these proposed matches because the applicant does not demonstrate that they are a credible and integral part of the grant project. A “scavenger hunt” approach to matching funds is not a successful strategy. It creates a large review burden for the Agency and only results in disappointment for the applicant when they do not gain the *Leveraging* points they expected to achieve.

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Other Funds Worksheet: Show all purposes that will not be funded with grant or match on this sheet. This would include each line-item that is either ineligible or for which grant or match funds will not be requested or proposed. This includes every item on the *Overall Budget Worksheet* that is entered as having a “DLT % of Use” of zero. In addition, it includes any portions of line-items that are not predominantly for purposes which meet the Grant Program definition of distance learning or telemedicine. For example, if the applicant demonstrates that the use of a line-item can be apportioned as having a 25% “DLT % of Use,” the 75% that is not included in the grant or match budget is shown on this sheet. **(See D-1, Telecommunications System Plan & Scope of Work for detail about apportioning DLT project benefit.)** Remember to identify each line-item in the same manner as on the *Overall Budget Worksheet* (line-item number, site, description, etc.).

Tip - The “DLT % of Use” column on the *Overall Budget Worksheet* is used to show the percentage of use attributable to approved grant and match purposes. It is not a measure of the source of funding nor is it an indication of how much the line-item is used in the project. For example, on a line-item proposed by the applicant as an in-kind match, do not enter zero % because you intend it to come from your match. Remember that items shown at zero percent are not eligible for either grant or match. Another example would be attendance software, which is not eligible under the grant program because it is an administrative cost. If shown on the *Overall Budget Worksheet*, it would be entered as zero % in the “DLT % of Use” column, regardless of whether it is used 100% of the time over the equipment financed by the project.

Budget Example - Overall Budget Worksheet:

Paper/Electronic Hybrid Application – We recognize that many applicants transcribe our forms into electronic form. To assist in this, we are providing the *Budget Worksheets* in Excel. If you have prepared your *Budget* in Excel and are submitting a paper application, we encourage you to copy your *Worksheets* onto a CD or DVD and attach it to the application.

Center City CC Site: The applicant, Center City Community College (Center City CC), plans a Distance Learning Project with three high schools; Woodland, Valley, and Southland. Center City CC will use the budgeted videoconferencing equipment to provide courses to the three high schools, but will not receive distance learning from them. Neither will it use the budgeted equipment to exchange distance learning on its campus or with any other sites not accounted for in the Budget and scoring. This makes Center City CC a true hub, so can be excluded from the *Rurality* and *NSLP* scoring.

Southland High is located in a relatively wealthy and urban area (> 20,000). The applicant could request grant funds for Southland and include it as an end-user in the scoring, but this would result in a much lower *Rurality* and *NSLP* score. Also, if the Agency determines that the grant funds requested or the match funds proposed are not necessary to benefit rural end users, or will provide more than incidental benefit to urban users, it may adjust the grant and match budget for this site to remove urban benefit. Instead, the applicant chooses to use other funds for Southland and apportion the funds budgeted at the hub to reflect the benefit that flows to the two end-users who will earn the higher *Rurality* and *NSLP* scores, Woodland and Valley. In this case, the applicant convincingly demonstrated in its *Telecommunication Systems Plan* that 40% of the

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coursework will be provided to Southland with the balance going to the two rural schools. This means that 60% of the videoconferencing investment at the hub (lines 1-7) can be attributed to the sites that benefit from the DLT project funded by the grant and on which it is scored. This percentage is entered onto the *Overall Budget Worksheet* in the “DLT % of Use” Column.

Line-items 8 and 9 are for a software package that includes ineligible purposes. The *Total School* package includes administrative functions such as attendance software and other academic record-keeping that is ineligible for funding with either grant or match. However, the package also provides functions that meet the DLT definition of distance learning. The applicant has obtained pricing and the basis for that pricing from its vendor. The apportionment by the vendor breaks out this software package into two line-items. The ineligible purposes are shown as having zero percent DLT purpose on line eight, even though they will be used in the project. The funds for this portion of the package must come from other funds. The eligible purposes are shown as having a 60% percent DLT purpose based on the same demonstration of use discussed above for lines 1-7. The 40% balance must come from other funds.

Line-items 9 and 10 are correctly shown as having zero percent DLT Use. Center City CC is not an end-user in this project. Classroom computers (and the wiring associated with them) are end-user equipment. As such, they are not part of this DLT project and could have been left out of the Budget.

Woodland and Valley High Sites: The project will provide both schools with essentially identical equipment. Each will get a distance learning classroom and lab equipped with video conferencing equipment (line-items 15-21 & 24 for Woodland and line-items 27-33 & 36 for Valley). The applicant demonstrated in the *Telecommunications System Plan* that the conferencing equipment will be used solely to receive distance learning so it is correctly entered at 100% in the “DLT % of Use” column.

In addition, the schools will install computers in other rooms (line-items 22, 34 and 35). The classroom computers will be used primarily for word processing and ordinary access to the Internet, which while not meeting the DLT Grant Program definition of distance learning, are not specifically ineligible. However, they will also be used at times to take formal online course work from the community college as part of the high school curriculum. The applicant demonstrated in the TSP that 20% of the computer’s usage will be for this purpose. As a consequence, it shows 20% DLT Use for the computers (line-items 22 and 34) as well as the classroom wiring associated with the installation at Valley (line-item35).

Southland: As discussed above, the applicant did not include Southland in the scoring. As a consequence, the funds budgeted at that site have a “DLT % of Use” of zero for this project and the funds must be provided from sources other than grant or match.

Budget Example - In-Kind Match Worksheet:

In this example, the applicant followed our recommendation to provide a cash match. If, for example, a local store, not involved with the project as a vendor, wished to contribute the LCD projector for Woodland High, it would be entered on this worksheet identified by the same line-item number as on the *Overall Budget Worksheet*. (See E-3, *Leveraging*, in Section IV of this guide for a more thorough discussion of cash and in-kind matching.)

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Budget Example - *Other Funds Worksheet*:

Some line-items that are part of a DLT project are not eligible as either grant or match. These funds must come from other sources. In addition, some line-items may not be predominantly attributable to the DLT project. **(See D-1, Telecommunications System Plan & Scope of Work for more detail about apportioning DLT project benefit.)** The balance of these line-items must also come from other sources. The applicant shows these line-items on the *OtherFunds Worksheet*. Identify each line-item with the same line number used for that item on the on the *Overall Funds Worksheet*.

Items that are partially attributable to the project are shown on this sheet in the amount not attributable to the project. Grant and match funds cannot be used to benefit sites not shown in the scoring. In this case, the applicant had demonstrated in the TSP that 60% of line-items 1-7 were attributable to the sites on which the application is scored and 40% would benefit sites not shown in the scoring. The 40% that must come from other funds is shown here. Similarly, the applicant had demonstrated that 20% of line-items 22, 34, & 35 is attributable to the DLT project. The balance of these line-items (80%) is shown here.

Items not eligible for grant or match are shown on this sheet in the full amount as shown on the *Overall Funds Worksheet*. In this case, the applicant proposes a software package that provides both administrative functions (ineligible) and DLT functions (eligible). The applicant had the vendor provided breakout pricing and the basis for that pricing so that it could present the ineligible and eligible purposes on separate lines. Line 8, for the ineligible purposes must come entirely from other funds. Line 9, for the DLT Purposes has a 60% DLT percentage of use based on the same attribution used for lines 1-7 described in the previous paragraph. The balance, 40%, must come from other funds and is shown on this worksheet.

Other ineligible items would also be shown here. For example, a building addition is not an eligible purpose for grant or match. If an addition were part of the project, it would be shown on both the *Overall Budget* and *Other Funds Worksheet* in the full amount. In this case, Center City and Suburban High are not shown as end-users in the Rurality and *NSLP* calculations, so 100% of line-items 9 & 10 as well as items 40-49 are shown on the *Other Funds Worksheet*.

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DLT Project
Overall Budget Worksheet
(See D-1 and D-2 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

| Line Item No. ¹ | Site Name ² | Description | Unit Cost | No. | Extended Cost | DLT % of Use ³ |
|----------------------------|------------------------|---|-----------|-----|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Center CC | Moderncom 3000 Server | \$2,125 | 1 | \$2,125 | 60 |
| 2 | Center CC | Poliburg 1776 Video Codec | \$9,675 | 1 | \$9,675 | 60 |
| 3 | Center CC | Tobsung T-98.6 DVD VCR Combo | \$1,480 | 1 | \$1,480 | 60 |
| 4 | Center CC | DV 2020X Digital Video Camera | \$940 | 1 | \$940 | 60 |
| 5 | Center CC | Illumimax 120/80 LCD Projector | \$1,420 | 1 | \$1,420 | 60 |
| 6 | Center CC | Micropixel P-5 5 Megapixel Document Camera | \$870 | 1 | \$870 | 60 |
| 7 | Center CC | Opus-infinity No. 4601 Mixer w lavalier and handheld microphones | \$1,870 | 1 | \$1,870 | 60 |
| 8 | Center CC | Total School Sftwr Pkg - Ineligible (see TSP) | | | \$37,600 | 0 |
| 9 | Center CC | Total School Sftwr Pkg- DLT Eligible (see TSP) | | | \$97,400 | 0 |
| 10 | Center CC | Omigosh Model 3-TBSP Classroom computers | \$750 | 200 | \$150,000 | 0 |
| 11 | Center CC | Wire Classroom computers into system | \$14,800 | 1 | \$14,800 | 0 |
| 12 | | Center City CC Subtotal | | | \$318,180 | |
| 13 | Woodland HS | Poliburg Intl 1776 Video Codec | \$9,675 | 1 | \$9,675 | 100 |
| 14 | Woodland HS | Tobsung T-98.6 DVD VCR Combo | \$1,480 | 1 | \$1,480 | 100 |
| 15 | Woodland HS | DV 2020X Digital Video Camera | \$940 | 1 | \$940 | 100 |
| 16 | Woodland HS | Illumimax 120/80 LCD Projector | \$1,420 | 1 | \$1,420 | 100 |
| 17 | Woodland HS | Micropixel P-5 5 Megapixel Document Camera | \$870 | 1 | \$870 | 100 |
| 18 | Woodland HS | Opus-infinity No. 4601 Mixer w lavalier and handheld microphones | \$1,870 | 1 | \$1,870 | 100 |
| 19 | Woodland HS | Dull 24 computer distance learning cart for Distance Learning Lab | \$21,780 | 1 | \$21,780 | 100 |
| 20 | Woodland HS | Omigosh 3TBSP Classroom computers | \$750 | 150 | \$112,500 | 20 |
| 21 | Woodland HS | Existing classroom wiring sufficient | n/a | n/a | 0 | n/a |
| 22 | Woodland HS | Wire Dist Learning Lab and video-conf. equip into system | \$11,340 | 1 | \$11,340 | 100 |
| 23 | | Woodland HS Subtotal | | | \$161,875 | |
| 24 | | | | | | |
| 25 | | | | | | |

Overall Project Budget – Page 1 Subtotal → 480,055

| Budget Summary | | |
|-----------------------|--|------------------|
| A. | (Sum of page 1 and continuation sheet subtotals) Overall DLT Project Budget⁴ | \$790,065 |
| B. | (as documented under Tab E-3) Less Proposed Cash Match⁵ | \$43,000 |
| C. | (from <i>In-Kind Match Worksheet</i>) Less Proposed In-Kind Match⁵ | 0 |
| D. | (from <i>Other Funds Worksheet</i>) Less Other Funds | \$586,851 |
| E. | DLT Grant Request (A – B – C – D = E) | \$160,214 |

- Use the line-item number established on the *Overall Budget Worksheet(s)* on the other budget worksheets. If line-item 16 on the Overall Sheet is ineligible, show it as item 16 on the *Other Funds Worksheet*. Don't start a new numbering system on each sheet.
- For non-fixed site applications, show the operational service center out of which the financed equipment will operate.
- This number refers to the % of use that meets the DLT Grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine, the portion that is eligible for either grant or match funding. Ineligible items or items for which no funding is requested are shown as zero percent, regardless of their use in the project.
- Line A is the sum of all DLT project extended costs as shown on this page and any continuation sheets. It includes the grant request and all proposed matches, as well as ineligible funds that have been included in the budget.
- Matching funds (lines B & C) must be properly documented under Tab E-3 of your application as described in detail in the *Application Guide*. Any portion that is not will not be credited as an eligible match.**

Place this Worksheet under Tab D-2 of your Application

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DLT Project

Other Funds Worksheet

(See D-1 & D-2 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

Some line-items included in a DLT Project Budget are not eligible as either grant or match. The funds for these must come from other sources and are designated “Other Funds.” Some line-items are only partially eligible as grant or match. The balance of these must also come from other sources. Show all other funds below in the same manner (line-item #, site name, and description) as on the *Overall Budget Worksheet*. Show the ineligible line-item cost (or portion thereof) in the “other fund cost” column adjacent to the source of that funding.

| Line Item No. | Site Name | Description | Other Fund Cost | Source |
|----------------------|------------------|---|------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Center CC | Moderncom 3000 Server | \$850 | Center CC |
| 2 | Center CC | Poliburg 1776 Video Codec | \$3,870 | Center CC |
| 3 | Center CC | Tobsung T-98.6 DVD VCR Combo | \$592 | Center CC |
| 4 | Center CC | DV 2020X Digital Video Camera | \$376 | Center CC |
| 5 | Center CC | Illumimax 120/80 LCD Projector | \$568 | Center CC |
| 6 | Center CC | Micropixel P-5 5 Megapixel Document Camera | \$348 | Center CC |
| 7 | Center CC | Opus-infinity No. 4601 Mixer w lavalier and handheld microphones | \$748 | Center CC |
| 8 | Center CC | Total School Sftwr Pkg - Ineligible (see TSP) | \$37,600 | Center CC |
| 9 | Center CC | Total School Sftwr Pkg- DLT Eligible (see TSP) | \$38,960 | Center CC |
| 10 | Center CC | Omigosh Model 3-TBSP Classroom computers | \$150,000 | Center CC |
| 11 | Center CC | Wire Classroom computers into system | 14,800 | Center CC |
| 20 | Woodland HS | Omigosh 3TBSP Classroom computers | \$90,000 | Woodland HS |
| 33 | Valley HS | Omigosh 3Tbsp Classroom computers | \$48,000 | Valley HS |
| 34 | Valley HS | Wire additional classroom | \$1,984 | Valley HS |
| 37 | Southland HS | Poliburg Intl 1776 Video Codec | \$9,675 | Suburban HS |
| 38 | Southland HS | Tobsung T-98.6 DVD VCR Combo | \$1,480 | Suburban HS |
| 39 | Southland HS | DV 2020X Digital Video Camera | \$940 | Suburban HS |
| 40 | Southland HS | Illumimax 120/80 LCD Projector | \$1,420 | Suburban HS |
| 41 | Southland HS | Micropixel P-5 5 Megapixel Document Camera | \$870 | Suburban HS |
| 42 | Southland HS | Opus-infinity No. 4601 Mixer w lavalier and handheld microphones | \$1,870 | Suburban HS |
| 43 | Southland HS | Dull 24 computer distance learning cart for Distance Learning Lab | \$21,780 | Suburban HS |
| 44 | Southland HS | Omigosh 3Tbsp Classroom computers | \$135,000 | Suburban HS |
| 45 | Southland HS | Wire additional classroom | \$11,450 | Suburban HS |
| 46 | Southland HS | Wire Dist Lrn :Lab and vid-conf. equip into system | \$13,670 | Suburban HS |

| | |
|--|------------------|
| D. Total Proposed Other Funds → (Insert this number in line D of the Budget Summary on the Overall Budget Worksheet) | \$586,851 |
|--|------------------|

Make copies of this sheet if needed and label them “continuation.” **Place this sheet with other budget sheets under Tab D-2**

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Notes for Budget Example

Total Grant Request: \$160,214 Total Proposed Match: \$43,000

DLT grants require a 15% minimum match

To calculate the match percentage:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Matching contributions} \div \text{Proposed Grant Amount} \times 100 &= \text{Match \%} \\ (\$43,000 \div \$160,214) \times 100 &= 26.84\% \end{aligned}$$

Calculation of 10% Rule for Category 3 Costs (See D, *Project Information*, in Section IV of this *Application Guide*)

There are three categories of eligible costs. The third category includes things like training and the development of instructional programming. Category three costs are limited to 10% of the grant request and/or match calculated separately. The budget above does not include any of these costs. If it did, the costs could would be limited as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} 10\% \text{ of the Grant Request} &= \$16,021 \\ 10\% \text{ of the match} &= \$4,300 \end{aligned}$$

D-3. Financial Information and Sustainability

The DLT program is focused on sustainability. Planning studies, research projects, and short-term demonstration projects of less than life of the award (three years) will not be considered.

Provide a narrative description that demonstrates your project's feasibility. Address the technical and programmatic expertise necessary to undertake and complete the project. Show how this expertise will ensure a sustainable project. You should also address the resources devoted to the project, and whether these resources will sustain the project. **Applications submitted without a *Financial Information and Sustainability* Section cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration.** Place this section under Tab D-3 of your application. Your narrative should include all assumptions and the following information:

1. A description of the project's revenues and expenses.
2. Evidence of cost sharing arrangements among hub and end-user sites, if applicable.
3. Identification of any other items that may affect feasibility or sustainability of the project.
4. A demonstration that the benefits, including cost savings, of the DLT grant pass through to those receiving services from the project.

D-4. Statement of Experience

Provide a written narrative describing your organization's demonstrated capability and experience in operating an educational or health care endeavor and any project similar to the proposed project. Experience in a similar project is desirable but not required. If your organization does not have experience with projects similar to the proposed project, you should explain how you plan to overcome this. Place this narrative under Tab D-4 of your Application.

E. Objective Scoring Supporting Documentation

E-1. Rurality

Rurality is the term we use to describe how rural your DLT project’s service area is. In other words, it is intended to be an accurate measure of rural benefit. We ask you to present an estimated *Rurality* score in your application. A *Rurality Worksheet* is provided in the *Toolkit* for this purpose. The Agency will review your estimate and correct it if necessary.

This category is scored on average population as described below:

- Your project must score at least 20 points to qualify for the DLT Program competition.
- Your project may obtain a higher score, up to a total of 45 points, depending on the relative rurality of the project service area.

We use the following definitions as determined by the 2000 Decennial Census to evaluate Rurality. (Note that the 2010 Census is being released over time. As of the writing of this *Application Guide*, the 2010 Urban/Rural update, which defines Urbanized Area, Urban Cluster, and Census Rural, is scheduled for release in October of 2012. As a result, we will continue to use statistics from the 2000 Census for the 2011 competition.) The Census defines an “Urbanized Area” as being a population center of 50,000 or more. It defines an “Urban Cluster” as having a population of between 2,500 and 49,999. It defines a “Rural” area as having no population center of 2,500 or more.

1. **EXCEPTIONALLY RURAL AREA – 5,000 and under.** Any area of the United States **not included within** the boundary as defined by the US Census of an Urbanized Area (UA) or of an Urban Cluster (UC) having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants. This includes areas within the boundary of urban clusters of 5000 and under as well as areas that are outside of any Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster.
2. **RURAL AREA – 5,001-10,000.** Any area of the United States included within the boundary as defined by the US Census of an Urban Cluster having a population over 5,000 but not in excess of 10,000 inhabitants.
3. **MID-RURAL AREA – 10,001-20,000.** Any area of the United States included within the boundary as defined by the US Census of an Urban Cluster having a population over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants.
4. **URBAN AREA - Over 20,000.** Any area of the United States included within the boundary of an Urbanized Area or within the boundary of an Urban Cluster in excess of 20,000 inhabitants. Remember that the DLT program is intended to benefit rural areas (20,000 or less). The Agency reserves the right to evaluate the benefit that flows to urban areas and reduce grant and match funds budgeted for the benefit of urban end-users when that benefit is not necessary to benefit rural end-users or incidental to the benefit to rural end-users.

| <u>Site Location</u> | <u>Points</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Exceptionally Rural Area | 45 |
| Rural Area | 30 |
| Mid-Rural Area | 15 |
| Urban Area | 0 |

The *Rurality* Score by Type of Project – Fixed, Mobile, and Variable Sites

Tips:

- As you prepare your *Rurality* data, if you find you are having problems finding the data, we recommend that you repeat each step of the several examples presented below to help you become familiar with the Census site.
- You may find that your browser blocks certain “pop-up images” from the Census site. If so, you will need to turn off the blocker to use every feature. Internet Explorer will tell you it has blocked a pop-up by placing a message under the toolbar in the top left corner of your screen. Click on that message and it will allow you to turn off the blocker for this site. Other browsers provide similar adjustments.

Most DLT projects operate at **fixed sites** such as schools or medical facilities. For these traditional DLT projects, the *Rurality* score as described below is based on the population associated with each end-user site. A subcategory of a fixed site project is a **mobile system** that sequentially serves fixed sites.

In recent years, we have begun to receive applications from projects where the end-user sites are not fixed. Although we sometimes receive distance learning projects along this line, to date, the **non-fixed site** category primarily comprises two types of telemedicine projects. In both cases, the end-user sites vary over time with need:

Home Health Care Systems – These typically involve either the placement of medical monitoring equipment at the home or the provision of equipment for visiting nurses so that they and the patients they visit can interact with medical professionals located at a distant site. In this way, medical monitoring can be performed elsewhere via telecommunications and care can be delivered into the home via telecommunications.

Ambulance Systems – These typically involve monitoring, pre-admittance testing, and interactions between the medical professionals in the ambulance and those in the emergency room, all conveyed via telecommunications.

End-user sites that vary over time were not contemplated when the regulation was written. It is clearly not a fair measure of the rural benefit of such projects to base the *Rurality* score entirely on the fixed sites of such a system, such as the location of the nurse’s hospital headquarters or the facility where the ambulance is parked when off duty. (This was the method used when these types of applications were first submitted.) In the first place, those sites do not represent the sites where the benefit of the project is delivered. Second, both the nurse’s headquarters and ambulance storage area are likely to be located in the most urban community in the area regardless of the extent of their rural service territory. On the other hand, it is not a fair method of determining rural benefit if we allow the applicant to choose its *Rurality* score by selecting to include in its *Rurality calculation* only the rural locations in its service area when some, or even the majority of the people it serves, are in Urban Areas. Neither can we rely on an applicant’s assurance that it will only use the funded equipment in its rural areas. We must operate under the assumption that from both a practical standpoint and from a medical ethics standpoint, equipment will be used based on medical need, not customer location.

In as much as we recognize such uses of telecommunications can provide important benefits to rural areas, we have specified a method of determining *Rurality* for non-fixed site projects - a method based

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on the idea that each potential end-user in the service territory is an actual end-user. This is a method that is consistent with the intent and spirit of the regulation while providing a measure of rural benefit that is reasonably comparable to that captured by the fixed-site method. In the discussion below, we will discuss two methods for determining a *Rurality* score based on the nature of the project, *i.e.*, fixed site or variable site.

Mixed Projects - We strongly recommend that you do not mix fixed site, mobile, or non-fixed site projects in one application. We have no administratively practical way to evaluate and score projects that combine fixed, mobile, and variable sites, so do not submit an application that mixes them. If you have this situation, we recommend you separate the projects and submit multiple applications that will be evaluated and scored independently. If you do not follow this recommendation, we will score mixed projects by evaluating the fixed, mobile, and non-fixed portions separately, and we will assign the lower score to the entire project. For example, if a mixed project has a fixed site *Rurality* score of 30 points and a non-fixed-site score of 26, we will evaluate the entire application as having a *Rurality* score of 26 points. A similar process will be used for assigning other scores.

Undefined Service Territories - Also, we have no administratively practical way to evaluate and score projects that do not have a defined set of users, such as a general offering made to anyone with Internet access. Such projects can not be considered for funding under the DLT Grant Program.

***Rurality* Score for Projects in which all End-User Sites are Fixed**

Enter each hub, hub/end-user and end-user site on the *Rurality Worksheet*, showing its location in parentheses. Although pure hubs are not included in the calculation, the Agency will need this data to recalculate the score in the event that we determine that the site should be included. Place the sites in the same order and use the same numbering as on the *Site Worksheet* and *NSLP Worksheet*. Use Census Urban and Rural Area population data along with the table above (it is also printed on the *Rurality Worksheet*) to determine *Rurality* points for each site. To document the numbers, attach a 2000 Census population sheet and map for each site's location behind the *Worksheet* as described below. The population to be used will be Census Urban and Rural Area data. Start the process from the main Legacy Fact Finder Page of the Census at this website:

factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en



Image 1

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If you have used FactFinder in the past, you will notice some changes as the Census migrates to a new web interface as described in the center section above. In particular, the mainpage of the FactFinder site features a discussion of the “New American FactFinder” and provides a link to the factfinder2 website. If you were to click on that link, you would see a screen like the one in Image 2.

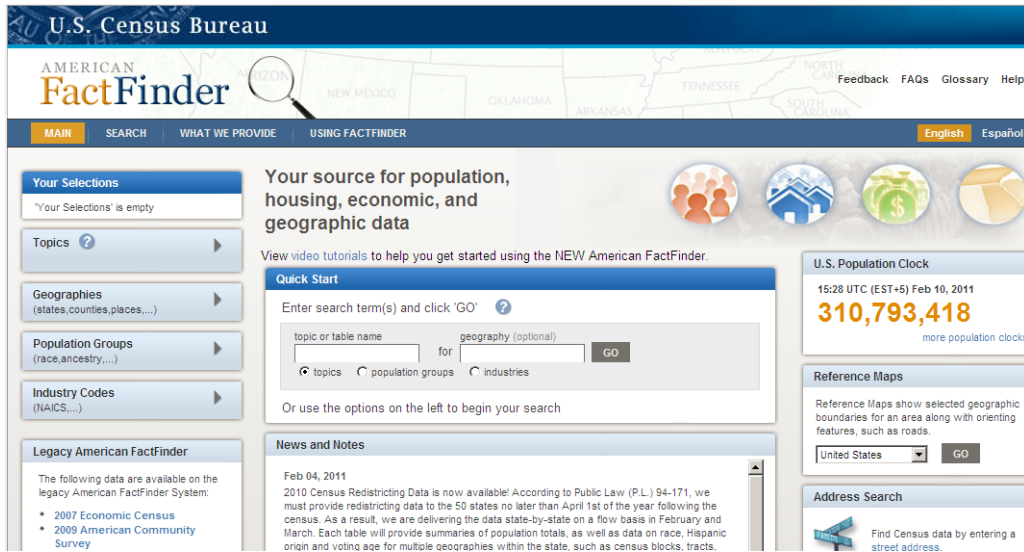


Image 2

Because the Urban and Rural Area Census 2010 information is not scheduled for release until October of 2012, we will continue to use the legacy FactFinder. Look at the left column of the legacy FactFinder mainpage, click on “Data Sets,” and then click on the drop-down menu “Decennial Census.”



Image 3

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The data sets of interest are circled below. The first we will use is “reference maps.” The mapping tool found here is quite versatile. It allows zooming and precise identification of a site’s location with respect to whether it is inside a Census Urban Area.

U.S. Census Bureau
American FactFinder

Main Search Feedback FAQs Glossary Site Map Help

Main > Data Sets

DECENNIAL

Load Query | Clear all selections

Census 2000 1990 Census

The Decennial Census occurs every 10 years, in years ending in zero, to count the population and housing units for the entire United States. Its primary purpose is to provide the population counts that determine how seats in the U.S. House of Representatives are apportioned. [more...](#)

Other Resources

- Census 2000 Gateway
- Count Question Resolution (PDF - 45 KB)
- Census 2000 Notes and Errata (PDF - 2.2 MB)
- Census 2000 SF 1 - SF 4 Data Corrections in American FactFinder
- Download Center
- Download data sets via FTP

Explain Table and Map Formats

2000

Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data
Summary File 1 presents counts and information [age, sex, race, Hispanic/Latino origin, household relationship, whether residence is owned or rented] collected from all people and housing units.

Census 2000 Summary File 2 (SF 2) 100-Percent Data
Population and housing characteristics reported for every detailed...

Select from the following:

- Detailed Tables**
- Geographic Comparison Tables**
- Quick Tables
- Thematic Maps
- Reference Maps**

Image 4

When you click on “reference maps,” it will bring up a map of the U.S. Click on “Reposition on A street address or ZIP code.” Enter the State College zip code “16801” to bring up a detail map.

U.S. Census Bureau
American FactFinder

Main Search Feedback FAQs Glossary Site Map Help

Reference Maps

You are here: Main > Data Sets > Geography > Results

Print / Download

Zoom in to state U.S. View

Click map to: Zoom:

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When the detail map appears, click on “Change Boundaries and Features.” Remove the checks from every item except “2000 Urban Areas,” then click the “Update” Button. If you wish, you may leave the block checked for “2000 Place” in the “Label Column,” not the “Boundary Column. You want the jurisdictional boundaries to disappear, but it is sometimes useful to have the place names remain.

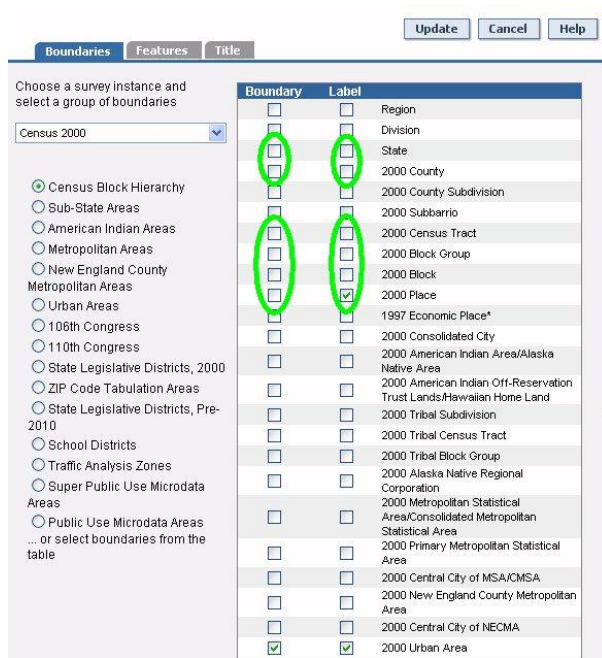


Image 6

This will alter the map you brought up based on the zip code so that it shows only the Census rural area (in yellow) and the State College Urbanized Area (in pink cross hatching). You can use the circled features to re-center and zoom until you precisely locate your site. To re-center, click on the “hand” button, move your cursor to the location you wish to center, and drag it to the center while holding down the left mouse button.

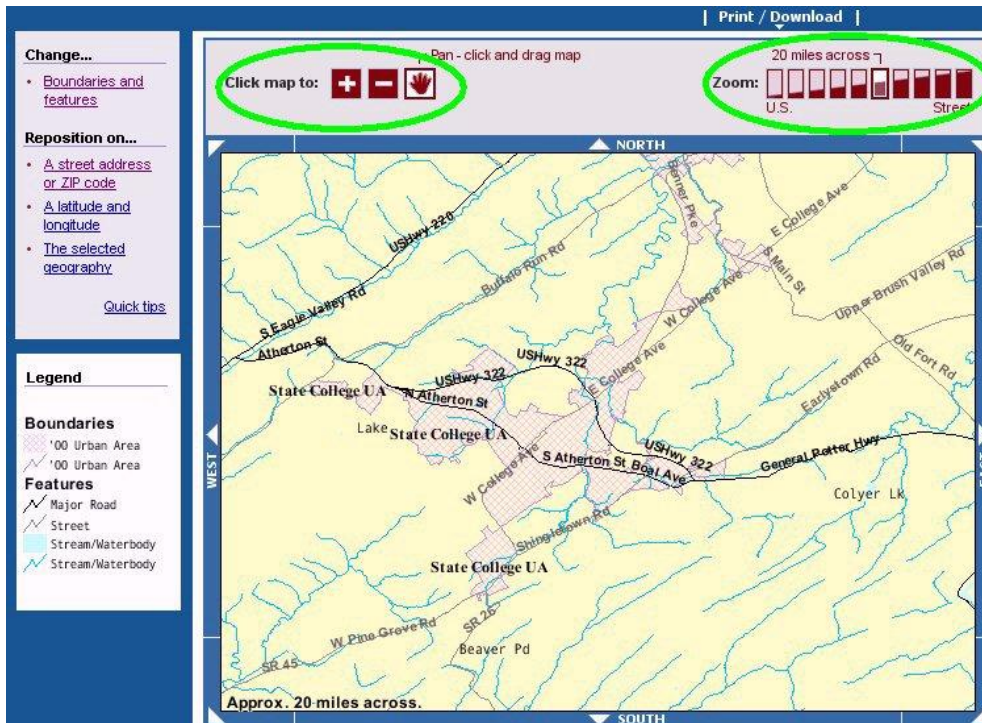


Image 7

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Print a Census page with a detail map like the one below. Include it in your application as documentation for this site behind your *Rurality Worksheet*. Show the site's exact location on this map. In this case, we have entered a hypothetical location on Porter Road in the yellow area of College Township at the top. A site located here is Census rural and would score 45 points. If the site were inside the checkered territory, you would designate it "Urbanized Area" and you use the State College Urbanized Area population. Do not enter the population for College Township, or any other political jurisdiction in which the site may happen to be located. The method for determining the State College Urbanized Area population is described below:

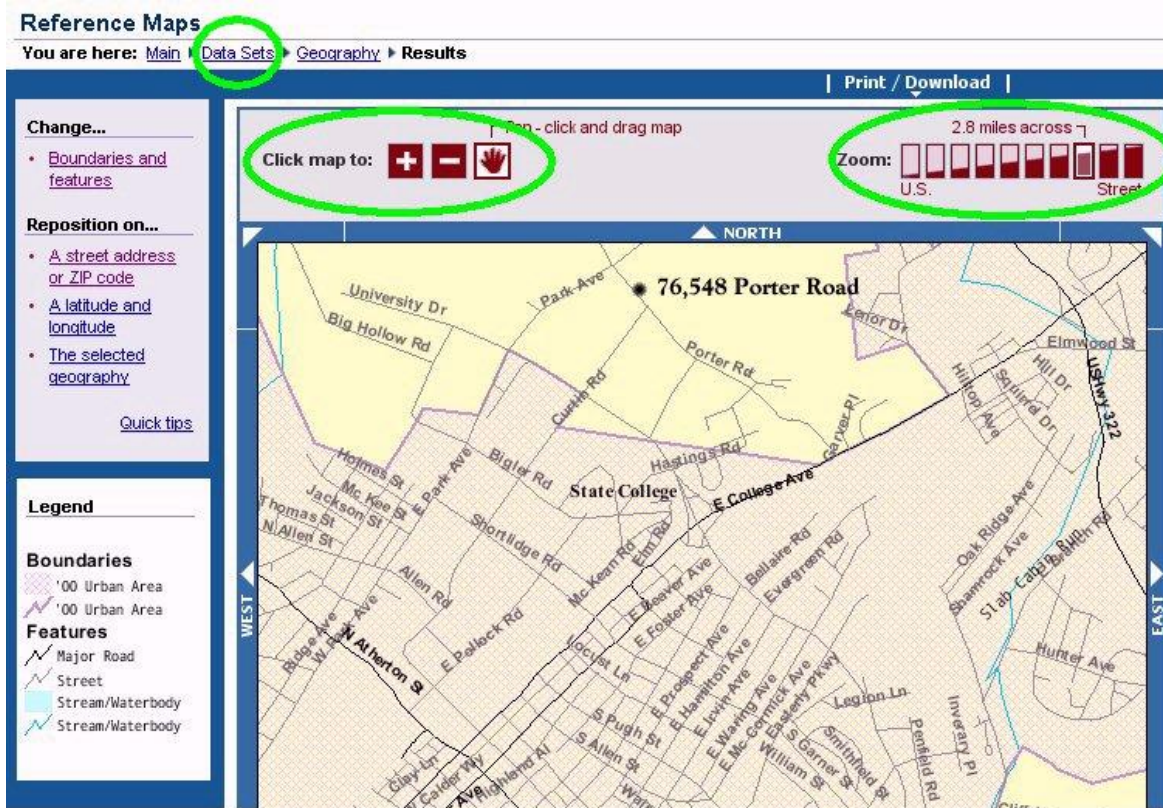


Image 8

Click on "Data Sets," circled in image 8. This will return you to Image 4. Click on "Detailed Tables." It will bring up the screen below. First select "Urban Area" from the drop down menu under "Select a geographic type." Wait while the website populates the next block with every "Urbanized Area" and "Urban Cluster" in the country. Scroll down to "State College Urbanized Area," highlight it, then click the "add" button. When it appears under "current geography selections," click on "next."

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Select Geography

You are here: [Main](#) ▶ [Data Sets](#) ▶ [Data Sets with Detailed Tables](#) ▶ [Geography](#) ▶ [Tables](#) ▶ [Results](#)
Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables

Choose a selection method

[list](#) [name search](#) [address search](#) [map](#) [geo within geo](#)

[Show all geography types](#) | [Explain Census Geography](#) | [Where are Geographic Components \(Urban and Rural\)](#)

Choose a geographic type

Urban Area

Select one or more geographic areas and click 'Add'

Staples, MN Urban Cluster
Starke, FL Urban Cluster
Starkville, MS Urban Cluster
State College, PA Urbanized Area
State Farm (Penal Institution), VA Urban Cluster
Statesboro, GA Urban Cluster
Statesville, NC Urban Cluster
Staunton, IL Urban Cluster

Map It

Add

Current geography selections:

==== Urban Area =====
State College, PA Urbanized Area

Download data for more geographic areas using

Remove

Next

Image 9

Choose P1, P2, and any other items in which you are interested and which may prove useful for your *Needs and Benefits* Section. Add them to the selection then press “show results.”

Select Tables

You are here: [Main](#) ▶ [Data Sets](#) ▶ [Data Sets with Detailed Tables](#) ▶ [Geography](#) ▶ [Tables](#) ▶ [Results](#)
Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data, Detailed Tables

Choose a table selection method

[by subject](#) [by keyword](#) [show all tables](#)

Select one or more tables and click 'Add'

P1. Total Population
P2. Urban and Rural (Total Population)
P3. Race
P4. Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino by Race (Total Population)
P5. Race for the Population 18 Years and Over
P6. Hispanic or Latino, and Not Hispanic or Latino by Race for the Population 18 Years and Over
P7. Race (Total Population)
P8. Hispanic or Latino by Race (Total Population)
P9. Race (Total Races Tallied)
P10. Hispanic or Latino by Race (Total Races Tallied)

Add

Current table selections:

P1. Total Population
P2. Urban and Rural (Total Population)

Remove

Show Result

Image 10

2011 DLT Grant Application Guide

This will bring up the page below. Enter this population on your *Rurality Worksheet*, which yields a score of zero points, and attach a copy of this page as documentation behind the *Worksheet*.

P1. TOTAL POPULATION [1] - Universe: Total population
Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| State College, PA Urbanized Area | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Total | 71,301 |

U.S. Census Bureau
Census 2000

Census [count corrections](#) for American Indian and Alaska Native Areas (AIANAs), states, counties, places, county subdivisions, census tracts, and blocks may have been released as a result of an external challenge through the [Count Question Resolution Program](#).

P2. URBAN AND RURAL [6] - Universe: Total population
Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| State College, PA Urbanized Area | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Total | 71,301 |
| Urban: | 71,301 |
| Inside urbanized areas | 71,301 |
| Inside urban clusters | 0 |
| Rural | 0 |
| Filler | 0 |

U.S. Census Bureau
Census 2000

Image 11

If outside a place designated urban by the Census, such as in the example shown above in image 8, print a Census Urban Area map that clearly shows the location of the site as being outside of the checkered Urban Area using the techniques described above. In extremely rural areas with no nearby population centers, this may require that you zoom out until the closest Census Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster shows on the map. Print this map, precisely identify your site's location, and include it as documentation behind the *Rurality Worksheet*.

In some cases, there may be ambiguity about your site's precise location. For example, if your organization has moved recently. (See the discussion about precise site identification on pages 15 through 17 of this *Guide*.) If there is any ambiguity, include ancillary identifying information and maps such as latitude and longitude or printouts from Internet sites such as Mapquest or Google Maps. Sometimes local jurisdictions produce maps that can be useful. **Any end-user site for which the applicant does not provide precise location identification and corresponding Census documentation will be evaluated as urban (zero points).**

Remember that for fixed sites, the information must be consistent throughout the application including on the *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets*, the *Site Worksheet* attachment to the SF-424, the *Executive Summary*, the *Telecommunications System Plan*, and the *Budget*. **If the end-user sites are not consistent, your application cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration.** (For projects where the end-user sites are not fixed, see below.)

After you have entered all your sites and the corresponding population on the *Rurality Worksheet*, calculate your estimated score by taking the average of the sites you designated as hub/end-users and end-users. Do not include pure Hubs in the calculation. Remember that we will evaluate sites you designate as pure hubs to determine if they are also end-users. If we make that finding, we will recalculate your score on that basis.

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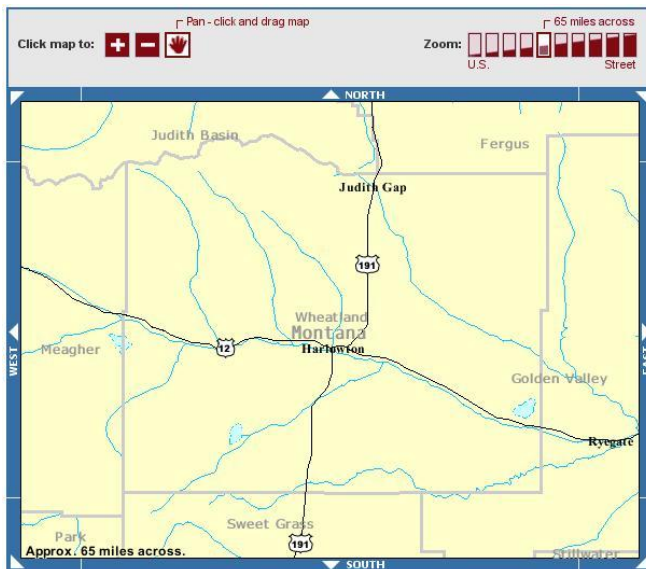
Excluded Sites - Your project may benefit urban sites (>20,000) that would not score well in the *Rurality* and *NSLP Categories*. Remember that the DLT Grant Program is intended to benefit rural sites. We encourage applicants to exclude urban end-users in their project. Should you choose to include urban end-users, but wish to exclude such sites from the calculations, show the excluded sites separately on the *Worksheets* with a clear indication that they have been excluded from the calculations. **In such cases, all funds that benefit the excluded sites must come from other funds. None can be included in the grant or match budget. This is true even if the funds are used for facilities located at a Hub/End-user site that is included in the *Rurality* calculation. (See D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan*, for detail on apportioning DLT project benefit.)**

Rounding and Eligibility

Scores are rounded in the normal manner to an integer (i.e., 30.5 rounds to 31, 30.49999 rounds to 30.0, but only after determining that a score meets the minimum eligibility threshold of at least 20 points. In other words, if a *Rurality* score is 19.65, it does not round to the minimum eligible score of 20 points.

Shortcuts for the Most Rural Areas

Sometimes you do not need to document each site with Census printouts when the sites are in very rural areas. For example, imagine a project which has several sites in Wheatland County, Montana. The applicant could pencil-in the sites on a Census map such as the one below and include a printout that shows the entire County population to be Census Rural.



P2. URBAN AND RURAL [6] - Universe: Total population
Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Pe

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling
<http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| | Wheatland County, Montana |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Total: | 2,259 |
| Urban: | 0 |
| Inside urbanized areas | 0 |
| Inside urban clusters | 0 |
| Rural: | 2,259 |
| Filler: | 0 |

U.S. Census Bureau
Census 2000

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Example of a Fixed Site Rurality Calculation for a Project:

Springfield Hospital proposes to share teleradiology services among itself, two medical centers, and two clinics. The hospital will be the electronic hub but it is designated a hub/end-user because patients there will use the services of radiologists from Faryer and Fall City Medical Centers in the absence of their own. Under the assumption that the benefit to the urban site is incidental to the benefit to the rural sites, this example project would receive 21 points ($105 \div 5 = 21$) the average of all end-user sites.

Remember, to be eligible to apply for a grant, the project must score at least 20 *Rurality* points. In this case, Faryer, Fall City, and Middleburg are all designated Urban Clusters, but each receives a different score based on the population of the cluster. The population for the Strinic Clinic is shown as “<2,500” because there is no specific population associated with Census Rural areas.

| | Site Name (Location) (Same numbering and order as <i>Site & NSLP Worksheets</i>) | Site Type (Hub, etc.) | Census Designation | Census Population | Rurality Points |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Springfield Hospital (Springfield Urbanized Area) | Hub/End-User | Urbanized Area | 56,403 | Zero |
| 2 | Faryer Clinic (Faryer Urban Cluster) | Hub/End-User | Urban Cluster | 27,298 | Zero |
| 3 | Fall City Medical Center (Beechwood Urban Cluster) | Hub/End-User | Urban Cluster | 12,398 | 15 |
| 4 | Middleburg Medical Center (Middleburg Urban Cluster) | End-User | Urban Cluster | 2,790 | 45 |
| 5 | Strinic Clinic (Windswept Crossroads) | End-User | Census Rural | <2,500 | 45 |
| Applicant’s Estimated Rurality Score (Sum of Rurality Points \div # of End-User Sites) | | 21 | Rurality Score (For Agency Use) | | |

Rurality Score for Projects in which all End-User Sites are Non-fixed

Important Note - Remember that non-fixed site projects must have an official, geographically defined service territory based on the map you provided with the Site Worksheet under Tab A of your application as described on pages 18-19. For example, a visiting nurse association may be chartered to serve the residents of a specific area. That area may be defined by a political boundary such as a county. Or it may be defined by a list of zip codes in which they provide service.

What it may not be is a description such as “well, we sometimes go as far as Mule Corners if we don’t have other business.” Nor can it be a description such as “well, our map shows a service area, but we actually don’t serve all of that area.” Undefined (flexible) service areas cannot be accurately scored for *Rurality*, which makes them ineligible for funding consideration.

Another example of an undefined service territory is any offering that is made generally available over the Internet. Because the beneficiaries can be anywhere, such projects cannot be accurately scored for rural benefit (*Rurality*). While the intent may be to serve rural areas, if the area cannot be accurately scored because it is geographically undefined, we cannot consider it for funding.

Before you begin, we note that many applicants try to use populations that are more familiar to them such as townships, boroughs, or zip codes. Use of such population can be done, but we recommend avoiding this approach because these numbers are frequently misleading and can not be used directly as described below. Also, as you read this section, you may wish to refer to the *Rurality Worksheet-for Non-Fixed Sites* in the *Toolkit* or the excerpt of that *Worksheet* that appears several pages below.

Enter each Census Urbanized Area and Urban Cluster in the service territory on a separate line. Show the name of the Urban Area in column 1, its Census Designation in column 2, and its Census Population in Column 3. In most cases, the service territory will include all of the Urban Area, and the same population that is shown in column 3 will be entered in column 4. If the applicant does not serve the entire Census Urban Area, provide a demonstration of the portion that is in the service territory and enter that population in column 4. Enter the entire Census Rural population in the service territory on one line. *Rurality* Points are based on the size of the Census Urban Area or the Census Rural Designation as entered in column 3, regardless of whether the applicant serves it in whole or in part. In other words, if the Urban Area is an Urban Cluster of 15,675, it will be scored as 15 points. If it is an Urban Cluster of 4,324 or if it is a Census Rural Area, it is scored as 45 points. On each line, multiply the population shown in column 4 by the points shown in column 5 to obtain the product, which is entered in column 6. Divide the total of column six by the total of column 4 to obtain the *Rurality Score*. Document the Urban Area populations with Census printouts in the manner described above under fixed sites and as demonstrated in the example that follows. Before reviewing the example of a non-fixed site project, you may find it useful to review the use of the Census tool as described above under “*Rurality Score for Projects in which all End-user Sites are Fixed.*”

Example of a *Rurality Score* for a Non-Fixed Site Project:

Imagine that a visiting nurse association serves Centre County Pennsylvania. As shown below, Center County (outlined in blue) contains 3 Census Urban Areas: State College Urbanized Area and the Bellefonte and Philipsburg Urban Clusters. As can be seen below, the Philipsburg cluster straddles the border with another County. The balance of the County is Census Rural. For purposes of illustration, we will assume that this organization’s defined service territory includes only Centre County residents.

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Image 12



Image 13

Start by going to the main Fact Finder website as shown above and click on the dropdown menu “Decennial Census” under “Data Sets.” On the next screen, choose “Detailed Tables.” Choose “County” and “Pennsylvania” from the drop down menus as shown below. Wait for the website to populate the list of counties. Choose “Centre” and then “add” and finally “show results.”

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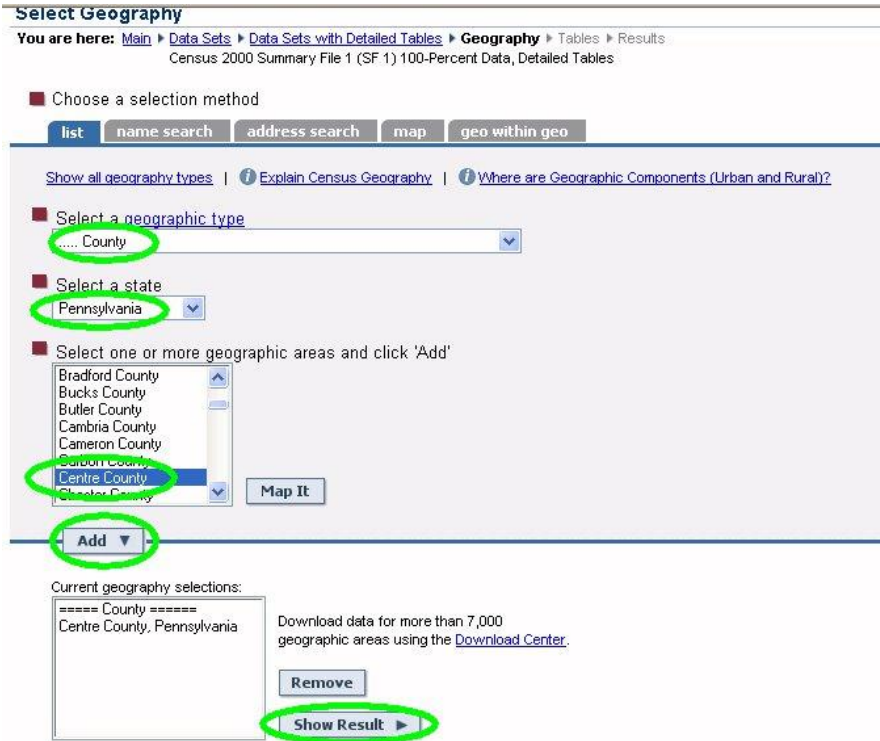


Image 14

The next screen will look like image 10. Choose P1 and P2, “add,” then “show results.” The next screen shows the total population of Centre County (135,758), the population in Urbanized Areas (71,301), the population in Urban Clusters (16,021), and the population in Census Rural Areas (48,436).

P1. [TOTAL POPULATION \[1\] - Universe: Total population](#)
 Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| Centre County, Pennsylvania | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Total | 135,758 |

U.S. Census Bureau
 Census 2000

Census [count corrections](#) for American Indian and Alaska Native Areas (AIANAs), states, counties, places, census tracts, and blocks may have been released as a result of an external challenge through the [Count Query Program](#).

P2. [URBAN AND RURAL \[6\] - Universe: Total population](#)
 Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| Centre County, Pennsylvania | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Total: | 135,758 |
| Urban: | 87,322 |
| Inside urbanized areas | 71,301 |
| Inside urban clusters | 16,021 |
| Rural | 48,436 |
| Filler | 0 |

U.S. Census Bureau
 Census 2000

Image 15

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With knowledge of its service territory, the applicant can guess that State College is the Urbanized Area, and that Bellefonte and Philipsburg are the Urban Clusters. To find the size of the Urban Areas, return to the screen shown in Image 14, select “Urban Areas,” wait for the website to populate the list, choose “Bellefonte Urban Cluster,” “add,” “Philipsburg Urban Cluster,” add “State College Urbanized Area,” then “show results.”

P1. TOTAL POPULATION [1] - Universe: Total population
Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| | Bellefonte, PA Urban Cluster | Philipsburg, PA Urban Cluster | State College, PA Urbanized Area |
|-------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Total | 11,241 | 8,737 | 71,301 |

U.S. Census Bureau
Census 2000

Census [count corrections](#) for American Indian and Alaska Native Areas (AIANAs), states, counties, places, county subdivisions, census tracts, and blocks may have been released as a result of an external challenge through the [Count Question Resolution Program](#).

P2. URBAN AND RURAL [6] - Universe: Total population
Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| | Bellefonte, PA Urban Cluster | Philipsburg, PA Urban Cluster | State College, PA Urbanized Area |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Total: | 11,241 | 8,737 | 71,301 |
| Urban: | 11,241 | 8,737 | 71,301 |
| Inside urbanized areas | 0 | 0 | 71,301 |
| Inside urban clusters | 11,241 | 8,737 | 0 |
| Rural | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Filler | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Image 16

State College accounts for the entire Urbanized Area population in Centre County. The sum of the Bellefonte and Phillipsburg Urban Clusters (19,978) exceeds the County Urban Cluster Population (16,021) shown in image 15 by 3,957. By looking at the maps for Bellefonte and Philipsburg, and recentering throughout the county, it can be determined that that Bellefonte Urban Cluster is entirely within Centre County, whereas Philipsburg Urban Cluster is partly in Clearfield County. It can also be determined that there are no other urban clusters in Centre County. Therefore, the portion of the Phillipsburg Urban Cluster Population within Centre County is 8,737 less 3,957 or 4,780.

The applicant would complete the *Rurality Worksheet* as shown below. In this case, the hypothetical project’s score would be 18.35. This project would not be eligible for DLT Grant funding, because the minimum required *Rurality* score is 20 points. If the score were eligible, the applicant would attach the appropriate Census Data Sheets like the ones above as documentation behind a copy of the *Rurality Worksheet – Non-Fixed Sites*, which would look as follows:

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| | 1. Service Territory Population Centers (List each Urbanized Area & Urban Cluster on a separate line. Show Census Rural Area(s) separately.) | 2. Census Designation | 3. Census Population | 4. Population in Service Territory | 5. Rurality Points | 6. Product (4 X 5 = 6) |
|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | State College | Urbanized Area | 71,301 | 71,301 | Zero | Zero |
| 2 | Bellefonte | Urban Cluster | 11,241 | 11,241 | 15 | 168,615 |
| 3 | Phillipsburg | Urban Cluster | 8,737 | 4780 | 30 | 143,400 |
| 4 | Centre County Rural | Census Rural | 48,436 | 48,436 | 45 | 2,179,620 |
| 5 | | | | | | |
| Sum Rows 1-5 of columns 4 & 6 ► (include any additional rows from continuation sheets) | | | | 135,758 | | 2,491,635 |
| Applicant's Estimated Rurality Score (Sum of Column 6 ÷ Sum of Column 4) | | | 18.35 | Rurality Score (For Agency Use) | | |

Autonomous Service Territories – We operate under the assumption that a non-fixed site project will operate over the entire area served by the applicant/organization. In other words, that any grant or match funded equipment will be used throughout the entire service territory based on, for example, medical need, not the location of the person to whom the service is provided. As such, the entire population of the service territory must be used in determining the *Rurality* score because the entire population benefits from the grant and/or match.

However, we are aware that in some cases a service provider will have multiple, discrete service territories that are essentially stand-alone operations. For example, a visiting nurse association may serve three counties, but operate as three discrete and autonomous units, each providing their service out of a separate physical facility in one of the three counties and providing service only in that county. Such an organizational arrangement can be referred to as a regional division.

In cases such, where an applicant serves more than one service territory, and those territories are well defined, already in existence, and operating autonomously out of a separate physical facility as a regional division, we can have reasonable confidence that if a grant is awarded to such a regional division, its benefit will flow only to the residents within that regional division. As a consequence, we will entertain an application specific to one (or more) regional division(s) of the operation and consider scoring the application on the specific regional division(s).

The burden of proof will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the equipment and personnel will work out of an existing physical location separate from other territories served by the organization and that the division provides service only within that defined territory. Future service territory divisions, pledges to reorganize by territory, organizational service territories on paper, and other types of arrangements, that are not distinct and physically autonomous regional divisions will not be considered. To be considered as stand-alone, the regional division must be existing and genuine. Otherwise, the applicant must base its scores on the population of the entire service area.

Supplemental Guidance for Non-Fixed Site Projects:

Complicated Service Territory - Some projects entire service territory may be in an exceptionally rural area (5,000 or less). If the Pine County visiting nurse association serves all of Pine County, and the Census website shows no Urban Cluster in the entire County, or no Urban Cluster larger than 5,000, the *Rurality Worksheet* and supporting data are easily prepared.

On the other hand, a service territory may not be tied to easily identifiable borders like a county. In such cases, the Census website provides additional levels of detail which should allow evaluation of even the most complicated service territory by allowing the applicant to align its service boundary with these smaller population units. The Census provides population information at the County, sub-County and Subbarrio level. It also provides data and maps at the Census Tract, Census Block Group, and Census Block level. You can obtain these other categories by altering what was done in images 5 - 7, above. After repositioning on the zip code for State College and choosing “Change Boundaries and features,” we turn off some things as before but leave Census Tract, Block Group, and Urban Area. When the map is updated, the Census Tracts and Block Groups are outlined and numbered. If even finer detail is needed, Census Blocks can be mapped.

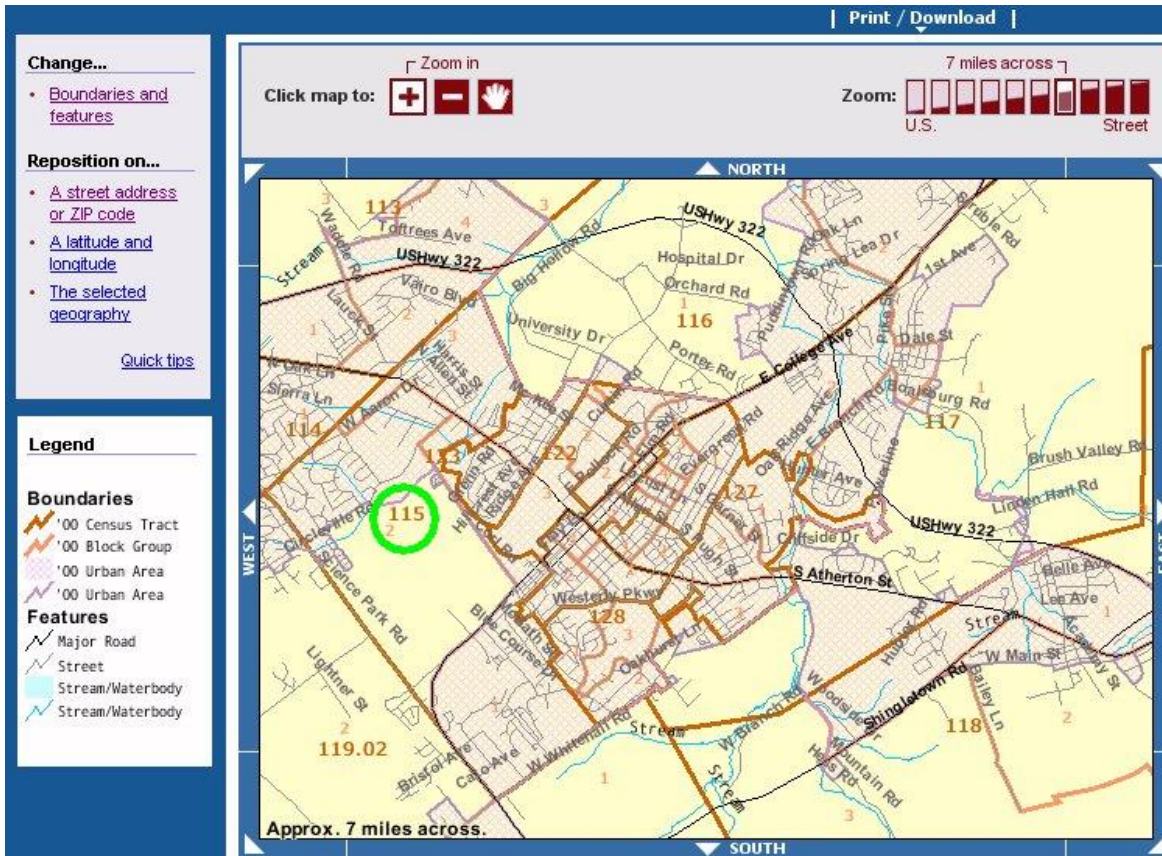


Image 17

To obtain the population of Census Tract 115, Block Group 2 (circled on the map above), return to “Detailed Tables” as shown in Image 14, enter the details as shown below, then select “Add” and “Show Results” as in previous examples to obtain the population of that individual Block Group. Note that this particular tract contains a mixture of urban and rural population:

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[Show all geography types](#) | [Explain Census Geography](#) | [Where are Geographic Components](#)

Select a geographic type
 Block Group

Select a state
 Pennsylvania

Select a county
 Centre County

Select a census tract
 Census Tract 115

Select one or more geographic areas and click 'Add'

- All Block Groups
- Block Group 1
- Block Group 2**
- Block Group 3

Map It

Add

Current geography selections:

==== Block Group =====
 Block Group 2, Census Tract 115, Centre County, Pennsylvania

Download data for more than 7,0 geographic areas using the [Dow](#)

Remove

Show Result ▶

Image 18

[P1. TOTAL POPULATION \[1\] - Universe: Total population](#)
 Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| Block Group 2, Census Tract 115, Centre County, Pennsylvania | |
|---|-------|
| Total | 4,072 |

U.S. Census Bureau
Census 2000

Census [count corrections](#) for American Indian and Alaska Native Areas (AIANAs), states, counties, places, census tracts, and blocks may have been released as a result of an external challenge through the [Court Program](#).

[P2. URBAN AND RURAL \[6\] - Universe: Total population](#)
 Data Set: [Census 2000 Summary File 1 \(SF 1\) 100-Percent Data](#)

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| Block Group 2, Census Tract 115, Centre County, Pennsylvania | |
|---|-------|
| Total: | 4,072 |
| Urban: | 3,854 |
| Inside urbanized areas | 3,854 |
| Inside urban clusters | 0 |
| Rural | 218 |
| Filler | 0 |

Image 19

E-2. National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

This criterion uses National School Lunch Program (NSLP) eligibility statistics as a way to measure the financial need of the beneficiaries of the DLT project. We ask you to present an estimated *NSLP* score in your application. An *NSLP Worksheet* is provided in the *Toolkit* for this purpose. The Agency will review your estimate and correct it if necessary. For purposes of the DLT Program, the NSLP percentage reflects the percentage of students **eligible** for reduced-price or free lunches for each area served by a hub/end-user or end-user site, **not the percentage of actual participation**.

Background of the NSLP

The NSLP is a federally assisted meal program providing nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to millions of children in thousands of schools and childcare institutions. School districts and independent schools in the program receive cash support and donated commodities from USDA for each meal they serve. In return, they must serve lunches that meet Federal requirements and they must offer reduced-price or free lunches to eligible children. The Food and Nutrition Service of USDA administers the program at the Federal level. At the State level, state education agencies and local school districts usually administer the NSLP.

The NSLP Score by Type of Project – Fixed and Variable Sites

Most DLT projects operate at fixed sites such as schools or medical facilities. For these traditional DLT projects, the *NSLP* score is based on NSLP data for the sites where the end-users are located.

As discussed with greater elaboration above with respect to the *Rurality* score, other projects serve end-users that are not fixed but vary over time such as home health care. For these types of projects, the *NSLP* score is based on NSLP data for the entire service territory.

Tips:

- **If you have no supporting data behind your *NSLP Worksheet*, you have not documented your NSLP percentages, and you will receive a zero in this category.**
- If you are in a small district, where K-12 is in one school, or on one campus where the lunch facility is shared so that separate NSLP data is not available for the individual high, middle, or elementary school, make this clear in the supporting documentation you supply behind the *NSLP Worksheet*.
- If you provide printouts of NSLP data for many schools other than the sites in the application, **please highlight the data relevant to your application.**

Determining the NSLP Score for Projects in which all End-user Sites are Fixed

The *NSLP* score is based on the average of the relevant NSLP eligibility percentage for all hub/end-user and end/user sites. Use the following guidelines in preparing the *NSLP Worksheet*.

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Does the applicant use **specific school or district-wide** statistics?

1. If the hub/end-user or end-user site is a **public school or non-profit private school of Kindergarten through Grade 12 (K-12)**, use the eligibility percentage for that **specific school**. If it is a high school, provide high school data. If it is an elementary school, provide data for the elementary school. Do not provide district-wide data or data from another school.
2. If the hub/end-user or end-user site is **any other entity** (college, private for-profit school, library, hospital, clinic, etc.) use the NSLP eligibility score for the **public school district** in which the site is located.

How does the applicant enter data on the *NSLP Worksheet*?

1. Enter each hub, hub/end-user, and end-user site onto the *NSLP Worksheet* placing them in the same order as on the *Site Worksheet and Rurality Worksheet*. Identify the site by type. Provide data for hubs. Although pure hubs are not part of the calculation, the Agency will need this data if it determines that the site is actually a hub/end-user. Place pure hubs at the beginning of the list separated by a space and do not include them in your NSLP calculations as described below.
2. Your sites (fixed-site projects) or service territory (non-fixed-site projects) must be consistent throughout the application. **If the end-user sites or service territory are not consistent, your application cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible for funding consideration.**
3. Applicants **must document** each site's NSLP percentage with a certification from the organization that administers the NSLP in your area that the data is accurate and the most recent available. **Any site without verifiable documentation attached behind the *NSLP Worksheet* will be evaluated at zero percent eligibility.** Some official NSLP data is posted on state and/or local governmental websites. If so, you may provide printouts from these official sites. Make certain that the official website from which those printout are obtained is provided either on the printout or is added to it so that we can verify the information. A web address is to be provided with the printout, but if you provide only a web address, with no data, you have not documented your data and those sites will be evaluated at zero percent eligibility. Printouts without evidence of source and data from unofficial sites, such as commercial websites that report information about schools, are frequently out-of-date and/or unreliable, so they are not acceptable. Place all NSLP certifications and any other documentation behind the *NSLP Worksheet* under Tab E-2 of your application.

NSLP Documentation Errors to Avoid:

1. **No documentation. Your application will receive an NSLP score of zero.**
2. A statement from the certifying NSLP official that the data is correct and the most recent available, but with no evidence in the letter of what the data is.
3. An unsigned letter from the certifying official.
4. A letter from the certifying official without a clearly printed name and title.

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How is the score calculated?

1. The “Average NSLP” entered on the *NSLP Worksheet* is the average of the relevant NSLP eligibility percentages for all the hub/end-user and end-user sites or, in the case of a non-fixed site project, all the school districts that serve within the project service territory. When calculating the average, use the eligibility percentages exactly as received from the source of the NSLP data. In other words, if the administrator of the lunch program provides data to two decimal places, enter that data for each site on the *NSLP Worksheet* to two places.
2. **Do not round:** After calculating the average, enter it in the “Average NSLP” block on the *Worksheet*.
3. Use the decision table below (it also appears on the *NSLP Worksheet*) to enter the score in the “Applicant’s Estimated NSLP Score” block.

| Decision Table | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <u>NSLP Percentage:</u> | <u>Points</u> |
| NSLP < 25% | 0 |
| 25% ≤ NSLP < 50% | 15 |
| 50% ≤ NSLP < 75% | 25 |
| 75% ≤ NSLP | 35 |

Excluded Sites - Your project may benefit urban sites (>20,000) that would not score well in the *Rurality* and *NSLP Categories*. Remember that the DLT Grant Program is intended to benefit rural sites. We encourage applicants not to include urban end-users in their project. Should you choose to include urban end-users, but wish to exclude such sites from the calculations, show the excluded sites separately on the *Worksheets* with a clear indication that they have been excluded from the calculations. **In such cases, all funds that benefit the excluded sites must come from other funds. None can be included in the grant or match budget. This is true even if the funds are used for facilities located at a Hub/End-user site that is included in the *Rurality* calculation. (See D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan*, for detail on apportioning DLT project benefit.)**

Example of NSLP Calculation for a Project with Fixed Sites:

Central Community College will link itself, a community library, and two schools to the Deepwoods Nature Center for the purpose of receiving environmental distance learning courses via teleconference. The Deepwoods Nature center is the source of the distance learning content and does not receive any content from the other sites nor will it use equipment placed at Deepwoods to benefit users not shown on the *Worksheet*. As such, the applicant considers it a pure hub and does not use it in the calculation. The applicant correctly provides the NSLP data anyway so that if the Agency finds that the site is an end-user, it can recalculate the score. Central Community College will be the electronic hub of the network, but it will receive distance learning content from the Nature Center so it is a hub/end-user. The average of the four relevant percentages is 36.125%. The applicant looks at the decision table and enters 15 points in the “Applicant’s Estimated NSLP Score” block.

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| | Site Name (Same numbering and order as <i>Site & Rurality Worksheets</i>) | Site Type (Hub, etc.) | Total Students | % Eligible (See Attached) |
|---|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Deepwoods Nature Center (school district data) | Hub Not Incl. | 347 | 37.1 |
| 2 | Central Community College (use school district data) | Hub/End-User | 3,200 | 24.2 |
| 3 | Kingstown Library (use school district data) | End-user | 1,200 | 28.9 |
| 4 | Farwell High School (use specific school data) | End-user | 235 | 34.1 |
| 5 | Clarksburg High School (use specific school data) | End-user | 432 | 57.3 |
| Average NSLP (Sum of NSLP Percentages ÷ # of Sites) | | | | 36.125% |

| | | | |
|--|----|---------------------------------------|--|
| Applicant's Estimated NSLP Score (Enter Points from Scoring Table) | 15 | NSLP Score (for Agency Use) | |
|--|----|---------------------------------------|--|

NSLP Score for Projects in which all End-user Sites are Non-Fixed

The *NSLP Worksheet* for Non-Fixed Sites is quite similar to that for Fixed Sites except that it comprises all the Public School Districts that serve the non-fixed site service territory, whether in whole or in part.

| | School District Name | Total Students | % Eligible (See Attached) |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Valley Falls School District | 658 | 37.67% |
| 2 | Great Meadow School District | 345 | 56.82% |
| 3 | Sandy Beach School District | 532 | 42.78% |
| 4 | Roosevelt Public Schools | 439 | 32.49% |
| 5 | | | |
| Average NSLP (Sum of NSLP Percentages ÷ # of School Districts) | | | 42.44% |

| | | | |
|--|----|---------------------------------------|--|
| Applicant's Estimated NSLP Score (Enter Points from Scoring Table) | 15 | NSLP Score (for Agency Use) | |
|--|----|---------------------------------------|--|

E-3. Leveraging (Matching Funds and other Assistance)

The *Leveraging* score is based on the eligible matching fund contribution of the applicant and others. The applicant proposes a match. The Agency determines what is eligible. Based on what you believe to be eligible, we ask you to present an estimated *Leveraging* score in your application. The Agency will correct your estimated score if necessary. This criterion is intended to measure the level of commitment in the local community for the project. A DLT project that is widely supported within a rural community is more likely to be strong and successful. Remember that your application is evaluated for eligibility and scored based on the material submitted by the deadline. Additional information and clarifications not provided as part of the application as received by the deadline will not be solicited or considered by the Agency.

Special Matching Provisions for American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Under Federal law, applications from these areas are exempt from matching requirements up to \$200,000. The maximum DLT Grant in FY 2011 is \$500,000 and the required minimum match is 15%, or \$75,000. This means that for the FY 2011 DLT Grant Program, these areas are not required to provide a minimum match. However, to score points in this category, applicants from these areas would need to provide the same match levels as other applicants, *i.e.*, a 30% match would yield 15 points.

Eligible purposes for matching funds are identical to eligible purposes for a DLT grant. (Read this section in conjunction with Section IV, D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan* & D-2, *Budget*.) If an item is not eligible for grant funding, it can not be credited as a match. For a line-item to be eligible in full for match funding, the application must demonstrate:

1. That none of the use is for ineligible purposes,
2. That none of the use is to benefit sites not shown in the scoring, and
3. That the predominant purpose (over 50% of use) of that line-item is for purposes which meet the DLT grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine as described in the application.

If any part of a line-item is for ineligible purposes, the line-item cannot be budgeted for match. If otherwise eligible but the predominant purpose (50% or more of use) is not for the DLT project, or if some of the use will benefit sites not shown in the scoring, the applicant can propose that a portion of the line-item be budgeted for match. The portion eligible for match is that attributable to the sites on which the project is scored. The balance must come from other funds. **(See D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan and Scope of Work*, for detail on apportioning DLT project benefit.)**

- To be eligible, **items proposed as match must be integral to the project** in exactly the same way as items the applicant proposes to obtain with the grant. Keep in mind that the DLT Program is not simply a technology support program. The purpose of matching funds is not to give an advantage to institutions for general technology purchases that are not part of the project and which they would have made in any case such as annual computer purchases. It is intended to build distance learning and/or telemedicine systems by encouraging support for a project that would not exist if not for the grant.
- Your project must have non-Federal matching funds equal to at least 15% of the DLT grant requested to qualify for the DLT Program. The minimum match receives no points. Matches

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that exceed 15% can earn points on a sliding scale. There are special matching provisions for American Samoa, Guam, Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Applications from these areas are not required to provide a minimum match in order to be eligible for the DLT Program. However, they must meet the same thresholds (30%, 50%, etc.) in order to earn points in the *Leveraging* category.

- From time to time, applicants seek to use an existing non-federal grant as matching funds towards their DLT Grant application. To document the match, they include a copy of the announcement letter from the grantor. However, the letter from the grantor is often not explicit about the purpose of the grant or the letter may imply unstated limitations or exclusions. Under such circumstances, we cannot credit the proposed match. If you intend to apply another grant as matching funds toward the DLT Grant application, include a letter from the grant recipient stating that the money in that grant is available and can be applied to the purposes of the DLT Grant.
- Frequently, a complete project requires items that are ineligible as grant or match such as a building addition. Although not eligible as matching funding, financial support and in-kind contributions from the local community (other than the applicant) that go toward such items shows evidence of the commitment of the community to the project. Detail this support in the *Budget* and provide evidence of this type of support under F-2, *Needs and Benefits*, but do not claim credit for it as a match.

Sources of Eligible Matching Funds:

- The Applicant. During this discussion of matching funds, when we speak of the applicant, we include the formal applicant (the organization that signs the SF-424) and also those entities that participate in the project as a hub, hub/end-user and or end-user site regardless of whether grant or match funds are budgeted for that site.
- Parties not participating in the DLT project either as a hub, hub/end-user or end-user site or as manufacturer, vendor, or service provider that will benefit from the grant through the prospective sale of goods or services. Parties not participating in the project include donors such as individuals, community groups, state and local governments, and charities. It also includes businesses whose products or services will not be purchased for the project. In general, federal funds cannot be used for match. An important exception is funding from the **Appalachian Regional Commission** (ARC). Please see www.arc.gov for a list of eligible counties under the *Counties in Appalachia* heading. Applying ARC funds as a match requires coordination with ARC State Program Managers and States in the Region. See the *ARC Members, Partners and Staff* link also at www.arc.gov for ARC State Program Managers contact information. DLT applicants considering an ARC match are strongly encouraged to contact their ARC State Program Manager(s) early in the process to explore the feasibility of an ARC grant.

Sources that Cannot Be Considered for Matching Funds

- Except for specific exceptions as provided for under Federal law, funds from other Federal sources cannot be used for matching.
- Manufacturers, vendors, and service providers whose equipment or services will be used as part of the DLT Project.

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Note: The regulation (7 CFR 1703) states that in-kind items must have an “established monetary value” and that “manufacturer’s or service provider’s discounts are not considered in-kind matching.” Because the purposes for grant and match are identical, a discount cannot be considered a cash match either. The reason for not considering discounts is that, in the world of telecommunications as in many parts of the marketplace, list prices are nominal. They are not an established monetary value. Actual prices are flexible and it is impossible for us to evaluate whether a discount has an actual established monetary value. The same logic applies to any proposed match (cash or in-kind) from a manufacturer, vendor, or other service provider that stands to benefit from the grant or match funds through the prospective sale of equipment or services. A match from one of these entities is indistinguishable from a discount and impossible to evaluate as to its value. As a consequence, we will not accept cash or in-kind matching funds from manufacturers, vendors, or service providers whose equipment or services will be used in the project.

Types of Matching Funds:

Cash: The regulation explicitly conveys the expectation that cash will be the usual method of leveraging when it states that “matching contributions must generally be in the form of cash.” Cash is unambiguous and can be applied to any eligible item in the budget. During review of an application, if the Agency were to determine that some items in the budget are ineligible, the removal of those items would not lower the dollar value of the applicant’s proposed match.

From time to time, applicants characterize their match as “cash,” but specify particular items that they will acquire with their matching funds. When linked to a specific item, such a proposed match is “in-kind,” not cash. As such, the eligibility of the proposed match is directly related to the eligibility of the item as described in the next paragraph.

In-Kind Match: In-kind matches are also acceptable under the regulation, but we do not recommend that the applicant propose them. In-kind matches must be closely scrutinized to determine if they have the same relevance and credibility as a cash match. Remember, an in-kind match must be integral to and necessary for the DLT project, not simply a technology purchase made in the same timeframe. Unlike cash, in-kind matches are tied directly to the eligibility of the proposed in-kind item. **Should we determine that the item is not eligible or not integral and necessary for the project, the item would be removed from the grant and match budget and the proposed match would disappear with it.** This may lead to a lower *Leveraging* score than you expected to earn. If the reductions were to lower your eligible match below 15%, your application would be ineligible for the DLT competition.

As a practical matter, there is no compelling reason for an applicant to propose an in-kind match. Because items acquired before the application deadline are not eligible for grant or match, any items that the applicant would propose as an in-kind match must be obtained with cash after the application is submitted. In other words, when an applicant proposes an in-kind match, it is in effect committing cash with which the proposed in-kind item will be purchased at some point after the deadline, except that if the item is not eligible, neither is the match. A true cash match (unspecified) can be applied against any remaining eligible purpose.

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Proposed in-kind matches from organizations not affiliated with the applicant and whose products or services will not be purchased as part of the DLT project are acceptable. Remember that the established monetary value of any proposed in-kind match must be demonstrated through evidence such as actual selling price. List prices and valuations assigned outside of the marketplace by the donor or others are not evidence of an established monetary value.

Special Note About In-Kind Matches

Last year we saw a significant increase of in-kind match proposals, no doubt due to pressure on budgets caused by the economic downturn. The purpose of matching funds in a competition is to encourage something that would not otherwise occur, not to give an unfair competitive advantage to entities that routinely make technology purchases over entities that do not. We scrutinize in-kind matches carefully to ensure they are credible and integral parts of the grant project. As is discussed above, there is no benefit to the applicant in proposing an in-kind match unless it is something that the applicant is already planning on purchasing for another purpose, in which case it is difficult to make the case that the purchase is an integral part of the grant project. The proposed in-kind matches we see are usually general technology purchases of items we do not tend to find in applications from those that propose a cash match. They appear to be compiled by examining planned technology budgets and proposing anything that can possibly be construed as having some connection to the project. In most cases, we do not credit these proposed matches because the applicant does not demonstrate that they are a credible and integral part of the grant project. A “scavenger hunt” approach to matching funds is not a successful strategy. It creates a large review burden for the Agency and only results in disappointment for the applicant when they do not gain the *Leveraging* points they expected to achieve.

Funding Commitments

Failure to properly document the minimum required match is the single largest reason that an application is returned as ineligible for funding consideration. For that reason, before we describe how to document your match, we include this list of errors to avoid.

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TIPS AND MATCH DOCUMENTATION ERRORS TO AVOID

1. Only documented matches will be credited. Each donor, including the applicant, must document its match. If you have nothing under Tab E-3 in your application, or nothing but a *Leveraging Worksheet* without proper documentation behind that *Worksheet* as described below, you have no match. As a consequence, your application is ineligible for funding consideration.
2. A signature on the SF-424, *Application for Federal Assistance*, does not document the commitment of matching funds in a form satisfactory to the Agency. Neither is a reference to matching funds, say in the *Budget* or *Telecommunications System Plan*. To be eligible, a match must be properly documented by the donor under Tab E-3.
3. The person signing letters documenting matching funds must have authority to commit funds on behalf of the donor. If you are not clearly such a person, for example, a chief executive officer, a board chairman, or school superintendent, you should attach evidence of your ability to commit matching funds. Examples of titles that do not convey clear authority are “technical coordinator,” “IT Manager,” or “Radiology Department Manager.”
4. An unsigned letter or a letter that does not carry the donor’s title is not acceptable. Neither is a letter that is signed “for” the responsible party and initialed, unless the person who initialed for the responsible party provides evidence not only of the responsible party’s authority to commit the organization, but of the initialing party’s authority to sign on the responsible party’s behalf.
5. You cannot commit funds on behalf of any organization except your own. If you are the superintendent of XYZ High School, you cannot commit funds on behalf of ABC middle school, a school over which you have no authority. The commitment for ABC school must come from that organization.
6. Conditional matches are not acceptable. For example, “We commit ZYX Funds, subject to Board Approval.” Until the Board Resolution is passed, no match exists. If it is not passed before the application deadline and included as part of the application, no proposed match can be credited because the funds were not committed by that deadline as required under the regulation.
7. Remember that proposed matches must be relevant to the project in the same way as items for which grant funds are requested. Do not propose as match items that are not going to the project. For example, if the proposed match is coming from a school district, you cannot be credited for funds going to schools that are not end-users as shown in the application. If you are proposing an in-kind match, specify the line-items in your supporting letter by the line-item number shown in the budget.
8. **Proposed Matches must be committed and available as of the application deadline.** This is true whether for a pure cash match or for the cash that you have committed as an in-kind match. Matches proposed in future years are considered conditional and will not be credited. For example, if an applicant proposes \$100 per year for ten years, we will credit only the \$100 committed in the year of the application. While you may wish to do internal budgeting over time, a match commitment must be for the entire amount without conditions.
9. Match letters must be specific and state the dollar amount. Avoid statements like “We commit 15% of our need.” Instead, state a specific dollar amount such as “We commit \$320 dollars, 15% as much as the grant budget proposed for our site in the application.” If your cash match is intended only for the benefit of a specific site(s), so state in your letter such as “We commit \$480 dollars, 30% as much as the grant budget proposed for our site in the application. Should the grant budget for our site be reduced, our proposed match is also reduced so that it remains 30% of the grant budget for our site in the application.”

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Match Documentation Specifics - The applicant must document the project’s proposed matching funds in form and substance satisfactory to the Agency. The documentation must be placed under Tab E-3 of your application. We have arranged the *Leveraging Worksheet* to provide a place to enter each contribution. Each proposed match entry on the worksheet must be supported by a signed letter from the individual donor proposing the match.

1. **Be signed by a person capable of obligating the donor organization.** Include the printed name and title of the person signing the letter. The letter must clearly indicate the name of the donor organization and state that the funds are committed to the proposed DLT project as described in the *Budget* and elsewhere in the application. If your name and title do not appear on the donor organization’s letterhead, attach evidence of your position to the letter.
2. **If the match is cash, state the \$ amount.** Letters without a stated cash amount cannot be credited as a cash match.
3. **If the proposed match is in-kind, state the \$ amount and give a complete description of the donation identified by the line-item number in the budget and the expected date of purchase.** Letters that do not identify the line-items in the budget cannot be credited as an in-kind match. Keep in mind that items acquired before the application deadline are not eligible for grant or match. Also, demonstrate how the established monetary value of the item was determined.

Proposed matches must be consistent on the SF-424, the *Budget*, and the *Leveraging Worksheet*. Proposed matches not documented under Tab E-3 with a letter as described above will not be credited in the *Leveraging* score.

Criterion Point Value and Allocation

Up to **35 points** are available under this criterion. Points are awarded as follows:

| <u>Percentage of Eligible Match Compared to Grant Request</u> | <u>Points</u> |
|---|---------------|
| 15% < Match % ≤ 30% | 0 |
| 30% < Match % ≤ 50% | 15 |
| 50% < Match % ≤ 75% | 25 |
| 75% < Match % ≤ 100% | 30 |
| Match > 100% | 35 |

Example: Applicants receive different scores based on their proposed matching funds:

| | <u>Grant Requested</u> | <u>Matching Funds</u> | <u>% of GRANT Funds</u> | <u>Points Scored</u> |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Applicant #1 | \$100,000 | \$15,000 | 15% | 0 |
| Applicant #2 | \$100,000 | \$45,000 | 45% | 15 |
| Applicant #3 | \$100,000 | \$60,000 | 60% | 25 |
| Applicant #4 | \$100,000 | \$80,000 | 80% | 30 |
| Applicant #5 | \$100,000 | \$105,000 | 105% | 35 |

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E-4. USDA Empowerment Zones (EZs)

This criterion awards points for an end-user site located in a designated USDA Empowerment Zone (EZ). (Points are awarded only for Empowerment Zones, not REAP Zones or other USDA designations.) We ask you to present an estimated *EZ* score in your application. An *EZ Worksheet* has been provided in the *Toolkit* for this purpose. The Agency will review your estimate and correct it if necessary.

(Important Note: In prior years, up to 10 points were awarded under this category for sites located in USDA Empowerment Zones (EZ) and Enterprise Communities (EC) and up to 5 points were awarded for sites located in Champion Communities (CC). The EZ and EC designations expired in 2009 and the Champion Community Designation ended in 2010. However, at the end of 2010, the EZ designation was extended by law until December 31, 2011.)

Up to **10 points** may be awarded for this criterion. If your project has:

| <u>At Least 1 End-user Site Located in a USDA:</u> | <u>Your Application will Receive</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Empowerment Zone | 10 points |

At the time this document was prepared, these are the 10 USDA Empowerment Zones. You will find links to each EZ's page at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/BCP-EZECList.doc.

| Round 1 Empowerment Zones | Round 2 Empowerment Zones | Round 3 Empowerment Zones |
|---|---|--|
| Kentucky Highlands EZ, KY Mid Delta EZ, MS Rio Grande Valley EZ, TX | Desert Communities EZ, CA Southwest Georgia United EZ, GA Southernmost Illinois Delta EZ, IL Griggs-Steele EZ, ND Oglala Sioux Tribe EZ, SD | Aroostook County EZ, ME FUTURO EZ, TX |

If any of your End-user or Hub/End-user sites are located in one of the Empowerment Zones, your application is eligible for points in this category. Pure Hubs are not eligible for these points. Ten points can be earned if at least 1 end-user site is in an Empowerment Zone. Additional sites located in that or another EZ do not earn additional points. The maximum score an applicant can earn in this category is ten points for having at least one site in an Empowerment Zone.

Any end-user site shown on the *EZ Worksheet* must be consistent with the sites shown elsewhere in the application such as on the *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets*. To document the EZ status of a site, place printouts from the EZ pages linked to the USDA website shown above behind the *Worksheet* under Tab E-4. **If not documented under Tab E-4, no points will be awarded in this category.**

For further information on Empowerment Zones contact:
 USDA Rural Development – Cooperative Programs
 1400 Independence Ave. SW Stop 3254
 Washington, DC 20250-3254
 202-619-7980 or 800-645-4712

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP-EZEC-Home.html>

Email: sharon.colbert@wdc.usda.gov
 or suzette.agans@wdc.usda.gov

F. Subjective Scoring Supporting Documentation

Subjective Scoring Strategies to Avoid

Over the history of the DLT Program, we have seen three attempted strategies that do not bear fruit for applicants trying to achieve higher subjective scores. The first is that applicants request copies of successful applications from prior years to use as a template. The second is that, at the conclusion of the scoring process, applicants request the scoring team's comments. The request usually contains language like "we want to see where we missed the mark" or we want to know what we have to show to score well." Finally, when applicants appeal their subjective scores, their appeal is often based on a demonstration that because they addressed each item mentioned in the subjective scoring sections of the *Application Guide*, they should get the maximum score.

All of these approaches exhibit a common hunch of applicants that although we describe them as "subjective" scoring categories, we actually have an objective target – that there are specific ways to respond, or words to use which will score well. Such is not the case. Distance Learning and Telemedicine projects evolve over time as needs and technology change. They are not a fixed target. We are looking for the best projects with the most compelling narratives that explain why they are the best projects. And there is no single "best." Remember that we are scoring distance learning and telemedicine projects in the same competition. A better analogy for the DLT subjective category competition is an art contest in which an applicant can submit a painting, a symphony, a novel, or any other type of art. There are many approaches to crafting a successful application. That is part of the reason why as discussed above under Section I-F, *Freedom of Information Act*, we recommend against using another applicant's successful application as a template. That is also why we do not solicit or collect "official comments" from our scorers. If we did, those comments would become the "*de facto* standard" towards which each applicant would aim their narrative and for which they would expect to earn high scores. Finally, it is why covering each item mentioned in the *Application Guide* does not ensure a high score. The advice provided there is not a checklist for a high score, only a starting point.

In the four subjective scoring categories (*Additional NSLP, Needs and Benefits, Innovativeness and Cost Effectiveness*), scoring is subjective, not absolute. As the name suggests, subjective scores are based on the subjective reaction of our scoring teams to the supporting arguments made in the application. This means that if a project were scored by two teams, it would almost undoubtedly receive different scores because the process is subjective. That does not mean that one score is correct and the other incorrect. Not only are these scores subjective, they are relative, in the sense that each application is scored in comparison to other applications in the competition that year. The competition varies from year to year and generally gets stronger. Also, the types of projects that applicants seek to fund change over time as needs and technology change.

The scoring mechanism is intended to create a ranking of projects within these categories. This means, for example, that an applicant's score is dependent on the qualities of documentation presented by all other applicants in that year's competition. A score received in a prior year for a similar project is not relevant. Applications tend to improve from year to year, so an applicant who uses the same quality of documentation year after year can expect to receive progressively lower scores.

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Provide self-contained arguments in each of the four subjective scoring categories. Reviewers will generally not consider information outside a category's write-up. For example, all information that the applicant believes could support its *Needs and Benefits* score must be under Tab F-2 of the application to ensure that it will be considered.

Each of the four subjective scoring categories attempts to assess a unique characteristic of the project which is not captured by the other scoring categories. For example, *Needs and Benefits* assesses the specific educational or health care needs, not the general economic needs of a project's beneficiaries. Economic need is captured by other scoring categories. *Needs and Benefits* also does not attempt to assess the *Rurality* of a project's area, although an applicant can argue that an unusual rural characteristic of its area contributes to its needs in a way that does not affect rural areas in general.

Generally speaking, applicants who apply to the DLT Program are rural and share relatively high levels of need. For a project to receive a competitive score in this program, the applicant must successfully demonstrate that it exceeds the norm for rural projects in a particular category.

Applicants are reminded that this is a national competition. Arguments showing only comparisons with other areas *in a state* are not compelling in this program. Comparative data should be both local and national in coverage.

In presentation in each of the four subjective categories, statements supported by numerical data generally receive the higher scores. Statistics about a project should be compared to national averages and ranges. These comparisons help reviewers understand statistics presented about a project. Presenting a spreadsheet showing, for example, statistics about end-user sites, with national references, is one way to effectively support subjective scoring arguments.

We also note that projects that provide initial benefits will generally score higher in the subjective categories of *Needs & Benefits*, *Innovativeness*, and *Cost Effectiveness* than those that propose improvements. For example, in a comparison of two projects with otherwise identical end-users, but where one is for first-time installation of video-conferencing capability, and the other is for an upgrade of existing capability, the first-time service will likely earn the higher scores.

Tip: In the subjective categories, do not restrict your supporting documentation to the guidance and examples cited here or use the examples as a template for your application. The material in this section is intended only to provide a starting-point. Neither should you think that gaining a grant requires special language, special expertise, nor that you will be more successful if you model your application on that of a previously successful applicant. You, the applicant, are the expert about the needs of your community and how your project will meet those needs. Use that expertise to paint a compelling picture of what your project can accomplish.

F-1. Additional NSLP

The primary measure of general economic need for an area served by a proposed project is based on the National School Lunch Program (NSLP as described above under E-1) and is captured in the *NSLP* score. **The *Additional NSLP* category is intended to provide an opportunity for the applicant to make the case that its *NSLP* score understates the relative economic need of a project's beneficiaries.**

If an applicant has an NSLP eligibility below 50%, and the applicant can demonstrate that the area it would serve, or the subset of the public it would serve, is not accurately captured by the NSLP percentage, it may request *Additional NSLP* points. **Based on the strength of the evidence provided by the applicant, the Agency may award up to ten points in this category.**

To score well, it is not sufficient to demonstrate, for example, above average unemployment compared to the state average without putting that statistic into context. The key to scoring points in this category is providing a convincing demonstration that the economic plight of the applicant's target beneficiaries is more challenging than that of other areas with similar NSLP scores.

To gain points in this category, the applicant must specifically request them in Section F-1 of the Application (See *Additional NSLP Worksheet* in the *Toolkit*).

F-2. Community Needs and Project Benefits

This criterion measures the extent to which the proposed project meets the goals and objectives of the DLT Program. We may award up to **45 points** in this category. You must **document the specific needs of the community and how the proposed project will address those needs**. You must also document evidence of support from the community.

Tip: Remember, this category is not intended to capture the general economic need of the area served by the project. That need is captured by the *NSLP* score, and, if applicable, *Additional NSLP* scores described above under E-2 and F-1. While a brief overall sketch of the local economy and geography is useful for context, extended discussions of the overall economic health of a region generally do not help tell the story of the specific needs to be addressed by your project.

Discuss Other Projects involving DLT Awards

DLT Grants cannot be awarded to projects that duplicate facilities. If any of the sites or service territory in the project as described in the application are part of another application in FY 2011 or were part of a project funded in the previous two DLT competitions (2009 & 2010), explain any relationship between or among these projects as you discuss the specific need and benefit that will be provided by the proposed project. In particular, discuss how match and grant funding for this project, if approved, would complement previous efforts. (Provide a more thorough discussion of project overlaps in the *Telecommunications System Plan*, as described above. In the absence of an explanation, overlaps in projects are assumed to be duplication and as a consequence, proposed grant and match budget may be adjusted to remove such duplication.)

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In addition, applicants with previous awards should discuss the implementation of that award with respect to the use of funds. The Agency strives to make the best possible use of DLT Grant Funds. **Previous awardees who are not diligent about using grant funds in a timely manner for their intended purpose should be aware that this will be considered a negative indication of need when assigning the *Needs & Benefits* score.**

Define the Community

In some cases, projects propose serving specific communities – the entire population of a town; all adults in several towns; or students in a particular school district. In others, the community to be served is a subset of the entire community. Whatever the nature of the community, your narrative should give us a clear picture of it.

Need for Services

Clearly state the economic, educational, or health care challenges facing the project's respective communities, and provide documentation that explains the challenges. Use verifiable data and statistics to substantiate and quantify these challenges. **Demonstrate how the proposed project will help resolve these challenges** and why the applicant cannot afford the project without a grant.

Document support for the project provided by experts in the educational or health care fields. Remember that the more specific the expert opinion is to your project, the more compelling it is. Substantiate the underserved educational or health care nature of the project's proposed service area; and **justify, explain, and document the specific educational or medical services that will provide direct benefits to rural residents.**

You should demonstrate that rural residents and other beneficiaries want the educational or medical services from the project. In other words, **show that the reason for the project is to meet local community needs, not simply to install technology that could possibly benefit the community.** Willingness of local end-users or community-based organizations to contribute to the costs of completing, operating, or maintaining the project is a strong indication of community support. Documentation of support includes letters of financial and non-financial commitment towards the project from local organizations.

Address the participation by local residents and organizations in planning and developing the project. Include evidence of this participation in your application. Examples of evidence of community involvement include community meetings, public forums and surveys.

The Agency will also consider the extent to which the application is consistent with the State strategic plan prepared by the USDA Rural Development State Director. (See IV-G, *Contact With USDA State Director.*)

Benefits Derived from Services

In addition to documenting the need for services, describe how the project would assist the community in solving these challenges. **Document the specific benefits of your project and quantify them in terms of expected outcomes.** Tie the benefits of your project DIRECTLY to the stated needs you intend to address. Provide measurable targets or goals such as estimates of the number of people that will benefit from the project.

Tip: Do not address benefits to your organization in this section, unless they are directly tied to community benefit. Benefits of the project that accrue primarily to your organization should be addressed under *Cost Effectiveness*.

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Examples:

For a distance learning project that serves secondary schools, provide the **number of schools and students** that will benefit. You should also **document** all other benefits provided by the project with quantifiable goals when possible such as:

- four-year foreign language availability up from 300 to 1,200 students
- organic chemistry offered for first time to entire district
- expanded educational facility use, like evening vocational training
- reducing the dropout rate from 17% to 12%

For a telemedicine project that serves a consortium of hospitals, provide the **number of health care facilities and the potential number of patients** to benefit. You should also **document** all other benefits provided by the project such as:

- time and monetary savings to the community from telemedicine diagnoses
- 400 patients receiving at-home monitoring
- 4 doctors retained in your community
- lives saved due to prompt medical diagnosis

Document ancillary benefits or multiple uses that create value in the rural communities which the project will serve. Examples include training, information resources, library assets, adult education, lifetime learning, community use of technology, jobs, and connection to the local and global information networks. If applicable, you should address particular community problems such as out-migration and the extent to which the project would reduce or prevent population loss.

F-3. Innovativeness of the Project

This criterion assesses how the objectives of the proposed project are met in new and creative ways. Up to **15 points** may be awarded for this criterion. There are two obvious ways that a distance learning or telemedicine project can be innovative, *i.e.*, technical and in application. Technical innovation is rare but possible in rural distance learning and telemedicine projects. Most of the innovativeness we encounter is in the application of state-of-the-art technologies to solve problems in new ways.

Innovation Issues

Technical innovativeness occurs where a new type of device is used to provide a capability. Examples of innovative technologies are the mobile presentation of a capability that previously had only been available in fixed locations, or where a new transmission medium (such as the Internet) is used to deliver data, replacing leased or dial-up telecommunications facilities. We expect applicants to use state-of-the-art equipment, so doing this alone does not contribute to a high score in this category. Technical innovativeness can be risky, so wherever it is truly present, the applicant should address any risks inherent in the approach.

Application innovativeness occurs where a tried and true technology is applied in a unique or unusual way to provide a new capability, or to provide a familiar capability in a new way. Presumably, all proposed projects will provide new capabilities to their beneficiaries, so an application with this characteristic alone would not earn a high score in this category.

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The application should explore the following sources of evidence of innovativeness:

- Does the project employ technical innovation?
- Are there educational and medical programmatic innovations proposed?
- Does the project use unique adaptations of technology to better meet the special needs or circumstances of the project's proposed service area or beneficiaries?
- Does the project have the potential to influence or promote changes in how distance learning or telemedicine services can be delivered in other areas?
- Does the project use existing resources (telecommunications facilities) in a new way?

Tip: The best examples of innovativeness will come from the imagination of applicants and cannot be suggested here. Technical and application innovativeness are by no means the only forms of innovativeness that will be credited by the reviewer.

F-4. Cost Effectiveness of the Project

This criterion evaluates the efficiency with which the proposed project delivers educational and medical benefits to beneficiaries. Up to **35 points** may be awarded for this criterion. Generally, efficiency of delivery is accomplished by studying every technology option, considering the use of available resources and using them wherever possible, creating a project that not only accomplishes the primary service delivery, but accomplishes many other functions as well. The emphasis in this criterion is *value*, not lowest cost alone.

Examples of ways the Applicant can demonstrate Cost-Effectiveness include:

1. The extent to which your organization considered alternative technological options for delivering the proposed services. The applicant must provide sufficient documentation reflecting accepted analytical and financial methodologies to substantiate its choice of technology as the most cost effective option. Cost information such as quotations from multiple vendors that you provide in the TSP and Budget is useful for demonstrating cost effectiveness.
2. The extent to which the project uses existing telecommunications transmission facilities. Supporting information may include evidence of considerations of the use of existing facilities, agreements between the applicant and other entities for sharing transmission facilities, and all other measures taken to lower the project's costs for using such facilities.
3. The extent to which the project will use existing networks at the regional, statewide, national, or global levels. Most projects connect to the Internet, so this use of an existing network has a minimal effect on an application's score.
4. The extent to which the requested financial assistance will extend or enhance the benefits of the project.
5. Whether buying or leasing specific equipment is more cost-effective.

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6. Whether a proposed project will accomplish purposes beyond the primary objective. Although the applicant is asked to specify whether distance learning or telemedicine is the predominant use of the project, the facilities funded by the project may benefit the community in other ways. Generally, a multi-use facility will be a greater asset to a rural area than a single-use facility if the two are equally efficient at performing the project's primary function.
7. Whether the proposed project creates the appropriate level of capability to reasonably meet the community's needs. This refers to a matching of project capability to the defined need.

Tips:

- Unsupported assertions of cost effectiveness are not useful. A spreadsheet showing initial cost and annual costs of all considered alternative technologies and implementations can offer strong support for a good score in this category. Don't forget to explain all assumptions and sources for cost information used in the comparison.
- Be sure that the facts presented are meaningful to the reviewer. For example, a statement that a telemedicine project will provide the capability for 42,000 rural residents to have access to teleradiology facilities at a cost of 29¢ per resident is not meaningful, but a statement that the teleradiology project will reduce the cost to a rural resident of a chest x-ray from \$125 to \$20, and will save the patient 6 hours of driving time, is meaningful.

G. Contact with USDA State Director

You must provide evidence that your organization has consulted with the USDA State Director for Rural Development about the availability of other sources of funding available at the State or local level. Include this evidence as part of your application.

You must also provide evidence from the State Director for Rural Development that your application conforms with the State strategic plan as prepared under section 381D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1921 *et seq.*). Not all states have a strategic plan, so you should indicate if such a plan does not exist. See Section IV, F-2, *Community Needs & Project Benefits*, for our use of this evidence in scoring your application. Include the evidence in your application.

Note: Applicants should contact the USDA State Director as early as possible in the application process. You can find a listing of the State Rural Development Offices here:

www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html

H. Certifications

The *Toolkit* contains certification forms to demonstrate compliance with other Federal statutes and regulations. There are nine required certifications and we have numbered them C-1 through C-9 so that you can see at a glance if they are all in your application. **Applications submitted without a non-duplication certification cannot be evaluated and will be returned as ineligible.**

Important Note: We receive many applications from groups of legal entities that have joined for the purpose of a DLT Grant application. If your application comes from such a group, and that group is not eligible to apply as a consortium (See Section IV-B of the *Application Guide* with respect to *Legal Eligibility*), each entity that comprises the group must provide a set of these certifications. In such cases, the volume of paperwork can be quite large. If the applicant so chooses, they may provide only one copy of the certifications, which should be included with the original copy of the application.

- C-1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination
- C-2 Architectural barriers
- C-3 Flood hazard area precautions
- C-4 Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970
- C-5 Drug-free workplace
- C-6 Debarment and suspension rules
- C-7 Lobbying for contracts, grants, etc.
- C-8 Non-duplication of services
- C-9 Environmental impact

Section V - Putting it all Together

Assemble and tab your grant application in the following order, which is the same order as described under Section IV - *The Complete Application*. Material not located under the proper tab will not be considered by reviewers. If material is relevant under more than one tab, it should be repeated under each relevant tab. Any supplemental information that the applicant wants to submit should be included under the relevant tab. The *Toolkit* provides forms, worksheets, sample certifications, and Web resources to help you find information and present it in your application.

| TAB | ITEM |
|-----|--|
| A | SF-424 – Application for Federal Assistance w/attach. (Site Worksheet & Optional Survey) |
| B | Legal Eligibility |
| C | Executive Summary |
| D. | Project Information |
| D-1 | Telecommunications System Plan and Scope of Work |
| D-2 | Budget |
| D-3 | Financial Information and Sustainability |
| D-4 | Statement of Experience |
| E. | Objective Scoring |
| E-1 | Rurality Calculation Worksheet and Supporting Documentation |
| E-2 | NSLP Worksheet and Supporting Documentation |
| E-3 | Leveraging Worksheet and Evidence of Funding Commitments |
| E-4 | EZ Worksheet and Supporting Documentation (If Applicable) |
| F. | Subjective Scoring Supporting Documentation |
| F-1 | Request for Additional NSLP Points Worksheet (If Applicable) |
| F-2 | Need for Services and Project Benefits |
| F-3 | Innovativeness of the Project |
| F-4 | Cost-Effectiveness of the Project |
| G. | Contact with USDA State Director—Rural Development |
| H. | Certifications |

2011 DLT Grant Application Guide – Appendix Process Changes from FYs 2006 & 2007

This appendix repeats discussion of significant process changes as those changes were described in the Fiscal Year 2006 and 2007 *Application Guides*.

2006 Application Review Process Changes

Eligibility and Scoring Information to be Complete by Application Deadline

The regulation requires that a “complete” application contain certain information and that it be submitted by the application deadline. Fundamental information such as that necessary to establish eligibility to enter the scoring pool and for the scoring itself are expected to be in the original application. This is confirmed by §1703.129, which concerns an applicant’s right to appeal its score. In that section it states that an appeal must be based on inaccurate scoring of the application and “no new information or data that was not included in the original application will be considered.” It follows that information submitted after the application deadline is not a basis for eligibility or scoring. To do otherwise gives applicants who do not follow the rules an unfair advantage by allowing them to demonstrate their eligibility and perfect their score after the deadline. This is not fair to applicants who submitted a proper application by the deadline according to the rules.

In our continuing effort to make certain that all applications receive fair and equal consideration, all information necessary for establishing eligibility for the program, for the eligibility of the project, and for determining the score must be submitted by the application deadline. We will not request such information after the deadline as part of the completeness review process.

So that there is no ambiguity about what is required by the application deadline, this *Application Guide* is cross-referenced so that you will know precisely what to include in your application. The three thumbnails that follow give a brief description of how applications will be reviewed:

1. Applications whose eligibility cannot be determined because they did not submit information sufficient to evaluate their project and establish that they meet the minimum set of requirements as specified in the relevant rules (7 CFR 1703, the 2006 Notice of Solicitation of Applications, and as elaborated upon throughout this *Guide*) will be returned as ineligible. In particular, any proposed match that is not properly documented under Tab E-3 will not be credited. This can reduce the applicant’s *Leveraging* score from what they expect. It can also result in the applicant’s being ineligible for funding consideration because of not meeting the 15% minimum match. Such applications are ineligible and will be returned to the applicant. **See E-3, *Leveraging*, in Section IV of the *Application Guide* for more detail on matching funds and the *Leveraging* score.)**
2. Information not necessary for determining eligibility but necessary for scoring must also be submitted by the application deadline. If scoring information is missing, the application will be scored based on the information submitted by the deadline.
3. Applications should be complete when submitted. However, information not required under the previous two paragraphs but necessary in order to be awarded a grant (the information required under Tabs G and H) will be requested as part of the completeness review process.

Application Format Described in the *Application Guide* Must Be Followed

The implementing regulation, 7 CFR 1703, is not designed for nor is it intended to be a guide on how to present your application. That is specified in the *Application Guide*. In order to make it administratively possible to review hundreds of applications and make the grant awards within a reasonable time, all applications must follow the format set in the current year’s *Application Guide*.

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Applications not presented in this format will be returned as ineligible. In particular, matches not properly documented under Tab E-3 of your application will not be credited as an eligible match. Please submit your application in an appropriately sized three-ring binder with tabbed dividers as described below and throughout the *Application Guide*. If you submit electronically, make certain that each page is clearly identified by Tab and page number, as if it were a physical application.

All information relevant to a section must be included under that section. Information contained elsewhere in the application will not be considered and cannot be a basis for a scoring appeal. For example, the only information that reviewers will consider in scoring *Needs and Benefits* is information which the applicant provides under Tab F-2, *Needs and Benefits*. If the applicant believes that information in another section (such as the *Telecommunications System Plan*) is relevant to the *Needs and Benefits* category, the information should be repeated under that category.

Proof of Shipping

Paper applications that are not delivered into our hands by the application deadline must carry proof-of-shipping by the application deadline from a third-party shipper such as a commercial carrier or the postal service. Other indications, such as a printed label from a postage meter, do not constitute proof-of-shipping. **(Look at C, *How to Submit a Paper Application*, and D, *How to Submit an Electronic Application*, in Section II of the *Application Guide* for information on submitting your application.)**

Apportioning DLT Project Benefit

Neither grant nor match funds may be used for ineligible purposes. Nor do ineligible purposes become eligible when they are lumped into a single line-item with eligible purposes. If a line-item will be used for any ineligible purpose, applicants are advised to obtain vendor pricing that apportions the eligible and ineligible purposes into separate line-items so that the eligible portion can be considered for grant or match. Otherwise, the entire line-item is ineligible. Also, to be eligible in full as grant or match, the applicant must demonstrate, not merely assert, that it will be used at least 50% of the time for purposes that meet the grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine and must also demonstrate that none of the other use is for ineligible purposes. Line-items that are used less than 50% of the time will be eligible as match or grant only for the percentage that does meet the grant definition of distance learning and telemedicine. **See D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan & Scope of Work*, in Section IV of the *Application Guide* for more detail on apportioning DLT project benefit.**

Third-Party Procurement

All items to be funded with match or grant must be obtained from an organization other than the applicant or other entities participating in the applicant's DLT project as hubs, hub/end-users, or end-users, *i.e.*, items must be procured from a third party. **See D, *Project Information*, in Section IV of the *Application Guide* for more detail on third-party procurement.**

Matching Funds from Vendors, Manufacturers and Other Interested Parties

We will not accept cash or in-kind matching funds from manufacturers, vendors, or service providers whose equipment or services will be used in the project. **See E-3, *Leveraging*, in Section IV of the *Application Guide* for more detail on matching funds and the *Leveraging* score.)**

In-Kind Matching Funds from Applicant and Participating Sites

The regulation explicitly conveys the expectation that cash will be the usual method of leveraging when it states that “matching contributions must generally be in the form of cash.” Cash is

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unambiguous and can be applied to any eligible item in the budget. During review of an application, if the Agency were to determine that some items in the budget are ineligible, the removal of those items would not lower the dollar value of the applicant's proposed match.

In-kind matches are also acceptable under the regulation, but we do not recommend that the applicant or other sites participating in the project propose them. In-kind matches must be closely scrutinized to determine if they are integral to and necessary for DLT purposes, not simply a technology purchase made in the same timeframe. Unlike cash, in-kind matches are tied directly to the eligibility of the proposed in-kind item. Should we determine that the item is not eligible, the item would be removed from the grant and match budget and the proposed match would disappear with it. This may lead to a lower *Leveraging* score than you expected to earn. If the reductions were to lower your eligible match below 15%, your application would be ineligible for the DLT competition. **Please remember that when you state in your matching documentation or budget that a specific line-item will come from matching funds, that is a proposed in-kind match, not a cash match. As such, its eligibility to be credited as a match is tied directly to the eligibility of that line-item.**

As a practical matter, there is no compelling reason for an applicant to propose an in-kind match. Because items acquired before the application deadline are not eligible for grant or match, any items that the applicant would propose as an in-kind match must be obtained with cash after the application is submitted. In other words, when an applicant proposes an in-kind match, it is in effect committing cash with which the proposed in-kind item will be purchased at some point after the deadline. Applicants should instead propose true cash matches which can be applied against any eligible item in the budget as a whole. **See E-3, *Leveraging*, in Section IV of the *Application Guide* for more detail on matching funds and the *Leveraging* score.)**

Consistent Site Information

DLT Grants are awarded as a result of a competition based on scoring. The nature and location of the sites and service territory in a DLT project are the basis for that competition. **Sites and service territory must be consistent throughout the application.** Otherwise, the application cannot be properly evaluated as to eligibility or score. **Applications without consistent site information will be returned as ineligible.** In particular, the sites must be consistent throughout the application including the:

1. **Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*** (Tab A of your application package). The applicant provides the most detailed site information on the *Site Worksheet* as an attachment to the SF-424. The *Site Worksheet* provides space to respond to information requested on the SF-424 and is designed to link that information to the project as described throughout the balance of the application package. The information includes the precise name and location of the site or service territory. If the applicant wishes to use a shortened name for a site, the abbreviation must be shown here and that abbreviation must then be used consistently throughout the application.
2. ***Telecommunications System Plan*** (Tab D-1)
3. ***Budget*** (Tab D-2)
4. ***Rurality Worksheet*** (Tab E-1)
5. ***NSLP Worksheet*** (Tab E-2)

2007 Application Review Process Changes

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Process Changes from FYs 2006 & 2007**

Refinement of the Tool for Evaluating *Rurality*

In our continuing effort to ensure fairness in the competition and to simplify the application process, we have adopted a new tool for use in calculating the *Rurality* score of a project. As before, the score will be based on data of the US Census. We will use their objective and extensive urban and rural area analysis while remaining consistent with the words and intent of the statute and regulation. More detail is provided below and elsewhere in the *Application Guide*.

If you are familiar with previous *Application Guides*, one of the first things you may notice is that this year's guide is considerably longer. This is due almost entirely to the additional guidance we have provided about how to use the Census website for determining your *Rurality Score*. This guidance contains many images of the relevant portion of Census web pages highlighting the navigational techniques needed to gain access to the data.

Background - The DLT program was created and operates under three pieces of legislation – the Farm Bill of 1990, an Amendment to the Farm Bill of 1992, and the Farm Bill of 1996. The program was conceived in the first of these bills, implemented in the second, and had features added to it in the third.

The statutory authority directs the Agency to finance “the construction of facilities and systems to provide telemedicine services and distance learning services in rural areas,” but leaves the determination of “rural areas” largely to the Agency, which is instructed to consider the “population sparsity of the affected rural area.”

Without new guidance in the legislation, the Agency adapted the definition of “rural” from the Rural Electrification Act under which we have operated our Telecommunications Program since 1949 and the Electric Program since 1935. As guided by the “sparsity” language and other guidance in the statute, we set an “urban” threshold of over 20,000 and divided populations under 20,000 into scoring ranges.

We repeat the DLT regulatory definition here for ease of reference:

EXCEPTIONALLY RURAL AREA – 5000 and under. Any area of the United States not included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 5,000 inhabitants. (45 points)

RURAL AREA – 5,001-10,000. Any area of the United States included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 inhabitants. (30 Points)

MID-RURAL AREA – 10,001-20,000. Any area of the United States included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 inhabitants. (15 Points)

URBAN AREA - Over 20,000. Any area of the United States included within the boundaries of any incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants. (Zero Points)

In short, the lower the population, the more points are scored. Clearly, the regulatory intent is to target program benefit to the most rural (sparsest) areas by giving those areas the highest score.

As the awareness of the DLT Program has spread through the education and medical communities and from its intended rural constituency to suburban and urban America, we have been receiving more applications to serve areas that no observer would characterize as “rural,” but if scored on the individual city, village, or borough jurisdictions, would receive a higher score than if the entire

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population center were considered. This is because the larger urban population is often divided into a number of separate jurisdictions whose individual populations may each be a small percentage of the overall urban population.

To ensure accuracy in a competitively scored program aimed at sparsely settled areas, the tools used to evaluate “rural” and “urban” should lead to a genuine characterization of how rural an area is. In other words, given two otherwise identical population centers, they should be scored similarly. The score should not be the result of varying jurisdictional peculiarities.

Analysis - There are two striking characteristics of the definition that must be considered in refining the scoring tool:

1. The language in the regulation refers to “any incorporated *or unincorporated* city, village, or borough” having a certain population. Because an “unincorporated city, village, or borough” has no defined boundaries or even a legal existence, the definition can be construed as referring to a collection of people in a population center that has characteristics typical of population centers such as cities, villages, and boroughs. In other words, in a state where towns are often not incorporated, a collection of 700 people living around a crossroads could be considered an unincorporated village. In another state, several adjacent boroughs that share the population characteristics of a city could be considered an unincorporated city.

The jurisdictional nature of population centers varies greatly from state to state. Townships, which are not mentioned in the regulation, are borough-like entities in some states. In others, a borough does not even describe a population center. A borough in Alaska is more like a county. Using a borough population would greatly overstate the population of a specific end-user site located outside of any town but within an Alaskan borough. Similarly, some cities have limits that extend far beyond the Urban Area and include significant rural area(s). Sites in the rural area, but within the city limits, would be scored inaccurately if based on the population inside the city limits.

Otherwise identical collections of people are organized politically in many different ways across the country. It is clear that using population data only from individual incorporated cities, villages, and boroughs provides non-uniform and unfair outcomes in the *Rurality* scoring category between projects and among states. Complicating this, prior to this year, we had not found a satisfactory tool for evaluating the population of an “unincorporated city, village, or borough” that is accurate, objective, and publicly available at no cost to applicants.

2. The word “boundaries” is plural. This suggests that we consider not only the individual boundary of each city, village, or borough, but the collective boundaries should such jurisdictions be part of one population center. It also directs us to consider the *de facto* boundaries of similarly populated unincorporated areas.

There is a compelling reason for looking at urban populations as a whole rather than by jurisdiction. As noted above, in some states, areas that have large populations are divided into multiple adjacent jurisdictions. Such individual jurisdictions within a larger population do not look or feel rural in the way that an isolated jurisdiction with a similar population does and they do not share the isolated community’s challenges that flow from an overall low population.

Conclusion - Similar populations should produce similar scores. We believe we must use an objective, nationally consistent, and publicly available (at no cost to applicants) tool to evaluate *Rurality* and that we have found that tool in the extensive data and objective analysis of the Department of Commerce’s US Census. The Census defines Urban Areas by the collective urban characteristics of a population center independent of political jurisdictions. We know of no other objective measure that is free and easily available to the public that comes closer to capturing the intent

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of the statutory direction to consider the “population sparsity of the affected rural area” while remaining consistent with the words and intent of the DLT regulation.

Census Designated Urban Areas - The Census defines two sizes of Urban Area:

1. **Urbanized Area (UA)** - An Urbanized Area is a statistical geographic entity comprising a central core and adjacent densely settled territory that together contain at least 50,000 people, generally with an overall population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile. An Urbanized Area can include all or part of one or more city, village, or borough as well as adjacent areas not incorporated as a city, village, or borough. An Urbanized Area does not share any area with another Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster. To learn more about Census geography, terms and criteria see www.census.gov/geo/www.
2. **Urban Cluster (UC)** - An Urban Cluster is a new statistical geographic entity designated for the 2000 Census, consisting of a central core and adjacent densely settled territory that together contains between 2,500 and 49,999 people. Typically, the overall population density is at least 1,000 people per square mile. Urban Clusters are based on Census block and block group density and do not coincide with official municipal boundaries. An Urban Cluster can include all or parts of one or more city, village, or borough as well as adjacent areas not incorporated as a city, village, or borough. An Urban Cluster does not share any area with, or touch another Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster.

The example that follows is for illustration. Guidance on how to use the website from which this Census Data is obtained is provided under E-1, *Rurality*, in Section IV of this guide. In addition to population data, the Census site has a wealth of information, including mapping of school and Congressional Districts, which can be of assistance in completing the Site Worksheet attachment to the Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*.

Example: Lincoln Park is a Census-designated place in Colorado. Here is how its population and area (in yellow) are displayed on *Fact Finder* if you use the “fast access to information” lookup on its main page (factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en).

The screenshot shows the American FactFinder interface. The search results for Lincoln Park CDP, Colorado, in 2000 are displayed. The total population is 3,904. The demographic profile highlights are as follows:

| General Characteristics | Number | Percent | U.S. |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|-------|
| Total population | 3,904 | | |
| Male | 1,882 | 48.2 | 49.1% |
| Female | 2,022 | 51.8 | 50.9% |

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Lincoln Park’s population is given by *Fact Finder* as 3,904, but if you click on “reference map,” it is clearly part of the greater Canon City population center. A site located in Lincoln Park, immediately adjacent to the Canon City population of 15,431 is not as rural as one located in an isolated town of 4,000. It does not share the reduced access to goods, opportunities, and services, particularly telecommunications, typical of the more thinly populated isolated town.

Lincoln Park CDP, Colorado



7 miles across

Close

U.S. Census Bureau



- POPULATION FINDER
- FACT SHEET**
 - Fact Sheet
 - Fact Sheet for a Race, Ethnic, or Ancestry Group
- PEOPLE
- HOUSING
- BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT
- ABOUT THE DATA
- DATA SETS
- DOWNLOAD CENTER

Main > Fact Sheet

FACT SHEET

United States | Colorado | Canon City city

Canon City city, Colorado

city/town, county, or zip

 state

[search by address >](#)

2000 2006-2008 data not available for this geography

View a Fact Sheet for a [race, ethnic, or ancestry group](#)

Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights:

[Reference Map](#)

General Characteristics - [show more >>](#)

| | Number | Percent | U.S. | | |
|------------------|--------|---------|-------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Total population | 15,431 | | | map | brief |
| Male | 7,720 | 50.0 | 49.1% | map | brief |
| Female | 7,711 | 50.0 | 50.9% | map | brief |

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However, even adding Lincoln Park to Canon City doesn't capture the actual size of the population center. The total population, as determined by the Census' Urban Cluster analysis, comprises Canon City, Lincoln Park, and parts of other adjacent places for a total in the contiguous built-up Urban Area of 26,332.

P2. URBAN AND RURAL [6] - Universe: Total population
Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Pe

NOTE: For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error
<http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf1u.htm>.

| | Canon City, CO Urban Cluster |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Total: | 26,332 |
| Urban: | 26,332 |
| Inside urbanized areas | 0 |
| Inside urban clusters | 26,332 |
| Rural | 0 |
| Filler | 0 |

U.S. Census Bureau
Census 2000



If a site is located in Lincoln Park, the Canon City Urban Cluster population is a better indicator of *Rurality* than is Lincoln Park's individual jurisdictional population. The situation is similar in many major metropolitan areas. Highland Park is an independent city in Texas with a population of 8,842. But it is surrounded by the City of Dallas, and is an integrated piece of the Dallas-Fort Worth Urbanized Area, which the Census shows as having a population of 4,145,659. Clearly, the Census' Urbanized Area population gives a more accurate picture of whether a site in Highland Park is located in an urban or rural area.

Throughout this guide, we will use population data from Census designated Urbanized Areas (≥50,000), Urban Clusters (2,500-49,999), and Census Rural (<2500) as the tool for determining populations located “within the boundaries of an incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough.” Guidance for completing your *Rurality Worksheet* and for finding population data are provided in this guide under E-1, *Rurality*, in Section IV of the *FY 2007 Application Guide*.

***Rurality* and NSLP Scoring for Applicants with Non-Fixed End-User Sites**

Applicant eligibility and scoring, particularly with respect to the *Rurality* category, is based on the location of the specific end-user sites such as schools or rural health clinics where people will benefit from the distance learning or telemedicine project. In recent years, we have received increasing numbers of applications from projects in which the end-user sites are not fixed. An example of this is a home health monitoring project where the equipment is moved over time from one patient's home to another as medical needs arise. Another example is an ambulance-based telemedicine project, where the equipment will serve an entire area.

These types of projects were not contemplated when the regulation was adopted. As a consequence, there is no established method for the applicant to estimate and for us to evaluate such an applicant's *Rurality* score or its *NSLP* score. *Rurality*, in particular, is central to the process because it is important not only in scoring, but in determining if the applicant is eligible for the program.

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Because these types of projects are becoming more common, we must specify a fair scoring method that meets the spirit of the regulation while providing a measure of rural benefit that is reasonably comparable to that captured by the method for fixed-site projects. We have provided such a method in this *Application Guide*. Applicants for such projects will base their *Rurality* calculation on the total population within their service territory that is located in each population zone using the *Urban Area* and *Rural* designations of the US Census as described above and under E-1, *Rurality*, in Section IV of this guide. In other words, each person, or potential end-user, is treated as if it were an actual end-user. Because this method will not look at specific sites but on the population as a whole, such applicants will base their *NSLP* calculations on the average for all school districts in the service territory. Also, because we must be able to evaluate the population that benefits from the project, the applicant must have a defined service territory (and end-users) that can be definitively shown on a map. Projects to serve undefined users (fixed sites or not) cannot be evaluated or scored, which makes them ineligible for the competition.

Finally, an application must be exclusively for one or the other, either fixed or non-fixed sites. The service areas of fixed and non-fixed site projects are not directly comparable because they are unlikely to benefit the same universe of people. As a consequence, we have no administratively practical way to score an application that contains both types of projects. An example would be an application for a fixed site teleradiology project that connects four clinics operated by technicians with the radiology department of a hospital as well as a non-fixed site project such as placing a videoconferencing system connecting an ambulance to the emergency room for purposes of triage. In other words, if you have both components in your plans, and you include both in one application, we cannot evaluate or score it, which will result in its being ineligible. See E-1, *Rurality*, and E-2, *NSLP*, for more detail about developing the *Rurality* and *NSLP* data and scores for projects with non-fixed end-user sites.

New Worksheets

In an effort to make certain that applicants know exactly what to submit and that it is submitted in a form that will speed the grant award process, we modified several worksheets in the *DLT Grants Toolkit* in FY 2006. This year we have added *Site, Rurality, and NSLP Worksheets* specifically designed for projects with non-fixed end-user sites as described in the preceding paragraphs.

We stress that all the *Worksheets* are there to guide you through the process and will prevent your making errors in the application. For example, the *Leveraging Worksheet* reminds you to document each donation in your proposed match under Tab E-3 behind that *Worksheet*. If you do not do so, the undocumented matches can not be credited, which could result in your application's being ineligible. (See the *Toolkit* for all the worksheets and forms you need to complete your application.)

Connecting Rural America



Distance Learning & Telemedicine Program

FY 2011 Grant Program Toolkit

Rural Utilities Service
Rural Development
United States Department of Agriculture



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Application Resources & Tips

- **APPLICATION GUIDE:** Please read and follow the *Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program FY 2011 Grant Application Guide* as you fill out the forms, worksheets and certifications in this Toolkit.
- **AS YOU FILL OUT OR SIGN EACH OF THE TOOLKIT ITEMS,** place them under the tabs of your grant application as explained in Section V, “Putting It All Together,” of the *Grant Application Guide*.
- **FILL THE FORMS OUT COMPLETELY.** Missing or inaccurate data on ANY of the forms will adversely affect our ability to process your application.
- **REGULATIONS:** The Program’s regulation governs the application process, the *Guide* and this Toolkit, but it does not specify application format. Use the *FY 2011 Application Guide* for instructions on how to prepare your complete application package. (See the Code of Federal Regulations, **7 CFR 1703, Subparts D, E, F and G**. A copy of the regulations is posted at the DLT Web page listed below.)
- **CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) Number: 10.855**
- **DLT PROGRAM:** (202) 720-0413 dltinfo@wdc.usda.gov
- **ONLINE RESOURCES**

| | |
|--|---|
| DLT Resources Web page | http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DLTResources.html |
| RUS Staff including Advanced Service Division and General Field Representatives | http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_ContactStaff.html |
| USDA Rural Development State Directors | http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/StateOfficeAddresses.html |
| EZ Webpage | http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/BCP-EZECList.doc |
| ARC Resources | www.arc.gov |
| State Single Points of Contact (SPOC) | http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc |
| Grants.gov Information | http://www.grants.gov/ |
| Get a DUNs Number | http://www.grants.gov/applicants/request_duns_number.jsp |
| Census FactFinder | http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en |

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0575-0096. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 49 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

| Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 (page 1 of OMB's webpage version) | | Version 02 |
|---|--|-------------------|
| 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed Corrected Application | 2. Type of Application * If revision, select appropriate letter(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation * Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Revision _____ | |
| 3. Date Received: _____ | 4. Applicant Identifier: _____ | |
| 5a. Federal Entity Identifier _____ | * 5b. Federal Award Identifier: _____ | |
| State Use Only | | |
| 6. Date Received by State: _____ | 7. State Application Identifier: _____ | |
| 8. Applicant Information: | | |
| a. Legal Name: _____ | | |
| b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) _____ | c. Organizational DUNS: _____ | |
| d. Address: | | |
| * Street 1: _____ | | |
| Street 2: _____ | | |
| * City: _____ | | |
| County: _____ | | |
| * State: _____ | | |
| Province: _____ | | |
| * Country: _____ | | |
| * Zip/Postal Code: _____ | | |
| e. Organizational Unit | | |
| Department Name: _____ | Division Name: _____ | |
| f. Name and contact information for matters involving this application: | | |
| Prefix: _____ *First Name _____ | | |
| Middle name: _____ | | |
| *Last Name: _____ | | |
| Suffix: _____ | | |
| Title: _____ | | |
| Organizational Affiliation _____ | | |
| Telephone Number: _____ | Fax Number: _____ | |
| E-mail: _____ | | |

9, Type of Applicant: #1 _____
 #2 _____
 #3 _____
 Other (Specify) _____

10. Name of Federal Agency: Rural Development Telecommunications Program

11. Catalog of Federal Assistance Number: 10-855
 CFDA Title: Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loans and Grants

12. Funding Opportunity Number: RDUP-07-01-DLT
 Title: USDA-DLT

13. Competition Identification Number: Leave Blank
 Title: Leave Blank

14. Areas affected by Project: **Attach Site Worksheet**

15. Descriptive title of Applicant's Project: _____

Attach supporting documentation as specified in agency instructions:

Attach Site Worksheet. Assemble and Tab Completed Application Package as described in Application Guide

16. Congressional Districts of: a. Applicant: _____ b. Program/Project: _____ **Attach Site Worksheet**

17. Proposed Project: a. Start Date: _____ b. End Date: _____

18. Estimated Funding:
 a. Federal: _____
 b. Applicant: _____
 c. State: leave blank
 d. Local: leave blank
 e. Other: _____
 f. Program Income: leave blank
 g. Total: _____

19. Is Application Subject to Review by State under Executive Order 12372 Process?

- a. This application was made available to the State under the E.O. 12372 process for review on: _____
- b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372, but not selected by the State.
- c. Program is not covered by E. O. 12372.

20. Is the Applicant delinquent on any Federal Debt? **NO** **YES** (If yes, provide and attach an explanation).

21. By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, title 218, Section 1001)**

I Agree ** The list of assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or Agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative: Prefix: _____ First name: _____
 Middle Name: _____
 Last Name: _____ Suffix: _____

Title: _____
 Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____
 e-mail: _____

Signature of Authorized Representative: _____ Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SF-424

These instructions include general instructions provided by OMB (in black) and the additional instructions and guidance from the Agency (in blue). In many cases, the Agency provides specific instructions or has already filled in the information making the general OMB instruction less useful. For these, the OMB text is shown in a small font. General OMB Directions not applicable to the DLT Program are struck through. This is a standard form (including the continuation sheet) required for use as a cover sheet for submission of preapplications and applications and related information under discretionary programs. Some of the items are required and some are optional at the discretion of the applicant or the Federal agency (agency). Required items are identified with an asterisk on the form and are specified in the instructions below. In addition to the instructions provided below, applicants must consult agency instructions to determine specific requirements. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.**

- 1. We have already checked the “application box” for you.** 1. Type of Submission: (Required): Select one type of submission in accordance with agency instructions. • ~~Preapplication~~ • ~~Application~~ • ~~Changed/Corrected Application~~ — If requested by the agency, check if this submission is to change or correct a previously submitted application. Unless requested by the agency, applicants may not use this to submit changes after the closing date.
- 2. We have already checked the “new” box for you.** Type of Application: (Required) Select one type of application in accordance with agency instructions. ~~New~~ — An application that is being submitted to an agency for the first time. ~~Continuation~~ — An extension for an additional funding/budget period for a project with a projected completion date. This can include renewal. ~~Revision~~ — Any change in the Federal Government’s financial obligation or contingent liability from an existing obligation. If a revision, enter the appropriate letter(s). More than one may be selected. If “Other” is selected, please specify in text box provided. ~~A. Increase Award B. Decrease Award C. Increase Duration D. Decrease Duration E. Other (specify).~~
- 3-5. Leave blank for our use.** 3. Date Received: Leave this field blank. This date will be assigned by the Federal agency. 4. Applicant Identifier: Enter the entity identifier assigned by the Federal agency, if any, or the applicant’s control number if applicable. 5a. Federal Entity Identifier: Enter the number assigned to your organization by the Federal Agency, if any. 5b. Federal Award Identifier: For new applications leave blank. ~~For a continuation or revision to an existing award, enter the previously assigned Federal award identifier number. If a changed/corrected application, enter the Federal Identifier in accordance with agency instructions.~~
- 6-7. Leave blank for state use.** 6. Date Received by State: Leave this field blank. This date will be assigned by the State, if applicable. 7. State Application Identifier: Leave this field blank. This identifier will be assigned by the State, if applicable.
- 8. There are multiple entries in this block.**
 - a. Enter the legal name of the applicant that will undertake the project funded by the assistance as that name appears in legal documents such as contracts, i.e., in full without abbreviations or omissions. (See Section IV-B of the *Application Guide*.)** Applicant Information: Enter the following in accordance with agency instructions: a. Legal Name: (Required): Enter the legal name of applicant that will undertake the assistance activity. This is the organization that has registered with the Central Contractor Registry. Information on registering with CCR may be obtained by visiting the Grants.gov website.
 - b. Enter the employer or tax identification number assigned by the IRS.** ~~If your organization is not in the US, enter 44-4444444.~~
 - c. OMB requires all grant applicants supply a DUNS Number (Dun & Bradstreet Universal Numbering System). The number is free. To obtain a DUNS number, please call Dun & Bradstreet at 866-705-5711 or refer to www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/duns_num_guide.pdf.** c. Organizational DUNS: (Required) Enter the organization’s DUNS or DUNS+4 number received from Dun and Bradstreet. Information on obtaining a DUNS number may be obtained by visiting the Grants.gov website.
 - d. Enter the complete address as follows: Street address (Line 1 required), City (Required), County, State (Required, if country is US), Province, Country (Required), Zip/Postal Code (Required, if country is US).**
 - e. Enter the name of the primary organizational unit (and department or division, (if applicable) that will undertake the assistance activity, if applicable.**
 - f. This information will be used for all contact and correspondence. Please complete carefully and in full. Attach a sheet if you want to provide additional contacts. It is crucial that we have accurate information, in particular, a fax number. If you do not have a fax, you must provide a reliable e-mail address to receive correspondence promptly. Otherwise, it will go by regular US mail. Given that response deadlines are based on the date of our correspondence, using mail effectively shortens your time to respond. If any of you contact information changes after you submit your application, please inform us.**

If you wish to delegate someone not in your organization to act on your behalf, attach a letter to the SF 424 listing the person’s name, organization, contact info, and relationship to your organization. Make sure the letter states the scope of the delegation and any **time** limit you wish to apply to their authority. The letter of delegation must be signed by the same authorized person who signs the SF 424 in Block 21. Remember, if you delegate someone, that person is responsible for responding to any date-sensitive request from us. Faxes

(or e-mails) will be sent to that contact. We also send a copy to the applicant, but that correspondence goes by mail. If you designate someone to act, but also wish to receive such correspondence as promptly as possible, make that clear and provide contact info for both. Name (required), organizational affiliation (if affiliated with another organization than the applicant organization, enter the name (First and last name), telephone number (Required), fax number, and email address (Required) of the person to contact on matters related to this application.

9. Type of Applicant: (Required) Select up to three applicant type(s) in accordance with agency instructions. For example, a public university that is identified as an Historically Black College could enter “H,T” Use the following designations. Many are self-explanatory.

- A. State Government. Do not include state supported institutions of higher learning.
- B. County Government. Exclude supported institutions of primary, secondary, or post secondary learning.
- C. City or Township Government. Also include boroughs or other forms of local municipal government. Exclude supported institutions of higher learning or post secondary education.
- D. Special District Government. According to the Census, special district governments are independent, special purpose governmental units that exist as separate entities with substantial administrative and fiscal independence from general purpose governments. This excludes school district governments. Special district governments provide specific services, usually only one, not supplied by general purpose governments. The services range from hospitals and fire protection to mosquito abatement and cemetery upkeep. It covers a wide variety of entities, most of which are officially called districts or authorities. However, not all so named represent separate governments. Many “districts” or “authorities” are so closely related to county, municipal, or state governments that they are classified as subordinate agencies of those governments. In order to be considered a special district government, an entity must possess three attributes - existence as an organized entity, governmental character, and substantial autonomy.
- E. Regional Organization. An organization affiliated with more than one state or local government, but without the governmental character of a Special District Government.
- F. U.S. Territory or Possession.
- G. Independent School District. Includes public primary & secondary districts (K-12), regardless of their specific relationship to states, counties, municipalities, or overlap with other public school districts.
- H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Learning
- I. Indian/Native American Tribal Government – Federally Recognized
- J. Indian/Native American Tribal Government – Other than Federally Recognized.
- K. Indian/Native American Tribally Designated Organization.
- L. Public Housing Authority/Indian/Native American Housing Authority.
- M. Nonprofit (Secular) with 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education.)
- N. Nonprofit (Secular) without 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education.)
- O. Private Institution of Higher Education.
- P. Individual. Individuals are not eligible for the DLT Grant Program.
- Q. For-Profit Organization other than Small Business.
- R. Small Business
- S. Hispanic-Serving Institution.
- T. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).
- U. Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs).
- V. Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions.
- W. Non-domestic (non-US) Entity. Not eligible. Only domestic areas (US and certain territories) qualify for DLT Funding.
- X. Other. (specify)
- Y. Nonprofit (Faith-Based – with or without 501C3 IRS Status)

10-13. We have entered the required information in blocks 10-12. Leave Block 13 blank. 10. (Required) Enter the name of the Federal agency from which assistance is being requested with this application. 11. Enter the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number and title of the program under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement, if applicable. 12. (Required) Enter the Funding Opportunity Number and title of the opportunity under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement. 13. Enter the Competition Identification Number and title of the competition under which assistance is requested, if applicable.

14-16. The information requested in these blocks is placed on the appropriate *Site Worksheet*. You may enter a descriptive title in block 15. Most applications propose projects that operate at fixed sites such as schools or medical clinics. Other projects operate at non-fixed sites. Examples of the latter include visiting nurse associations and ambulance-based systems. To be eligible, projects must be exclusively one or the other. Depending on the type of project, applicants will complete either the *Fixed Site Worksheet* or the *Non-Fixed Site Worksheet*. Remember that an application cannot be evaluated or scored (which makes it ineligible) if it contains both a fixed and non-fixed site component. See A., “Standard Form 424 and Attachments,” and D-1, “Telecommunications System Plan,” in Section IV of the *Application Guide* for extended discussion of how to categorize sites in your application and for determining which worksheet you should complete. 14. List the areas or entities using the categories (e.g., cities, counties, states, etc.) specified in agency instructions. Use the continuation sheet to enter additional areas, if needed. 15. (Required) Enter a brief descriptive title of the project. If appropriate, attach a map showing project location (e.g., construction or real property projects). ~~For preapplications, attach a summary description of the project.~~ 16. (Required) 16a. Enter the applicant’s Congressional District, and 16b. Enter all District(s) affected by the program or project. Enter in the format: 2 characters State Abbreviation – 3 characters District Number, e.g., CA-005 for California 5th district, CA- 012 for California 12th district, NC-103 for North Carolina’s 103rd district. • If all congressional districts in a state are affected, enter “all” for the district number, e.g., MD-all for all congressional districts in Maryland. • If nationwide, i.e. all districts within all states are affected, enter US-all. • ~~If the program/project is outside the US, enter 00-000.~~

17. (Required) Enter the proposed start date and end date of the project.

18. (Estimated Funding): Data shown in this box is summary information only. Showing a match in Box 18-b does not constitute documentation of matching funds in form and substance satisfactory to the Agency for evaluating matching funds. You must document your matching funds under Tab E-3 – Leveraging. (Required) Enter the amount requested or to be contributed during the first funding/budget period by each contributor. Value of in-kind contributions should be included on appropriate lines, as applicable. ~~If the action will result in a dollar change to an existing award, indicate only the amount of the change. For decreases, enclose the amounts in parentheses.~~

- a. Federal: Show the amount requested from the Agency as a grant. This number is line E, *DLT GRANT REQUEST*, in the *Budget Summary* block at the bottom of the *Overall Budget Worksheet* (See *Toolkit*).
- b. Applicant: Show the total proposed matching contributions regardless of source. This number is the sum of lines B & C, *Less Proposed Cash Match* and *Less Proposed In-Kind Match*, in the *Budget Summary* block at the bottom of the *Overall Budget Worksheet*. This is a summary number and does not constitute documentation of your match, which must be provided under Tab E-3.
- c, d, & f: Leave Blank.
- e. Other: Show amounts in the project budget, but not in the grant request or proposed matching funds. This number is line D, *Less Other Funds*, in the *Budget Summary* block of the *Overall Budget Worksheet*.
- g. Total: Show the total budget. This number is line A, *Overall DLT Project Budget*, in the *Budget Summary* block of the *Overall Budget Worksheet*.

19. The DLT Program is subject to Executive Order 12372, *Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs*. The Order requires that grant applicants consult with State and local officials if that state has a *State Local Point of Contact* (SPOC). If your state has a SPOC, you must submit a copy of your application to them at the same time you submit your application to us. Check this website to determine if your state has a SPOC and for contact information:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc

The following states had a SPOC at the time this Guide was prepared. Double-check the website above when you prepare your application to make certain that your state has not established a SPOC in the meantime. 19. Applicants should contact the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Federal Executive Order 12372 to determine whether the application is subject to the State intergovernmental review process. Select the appropriate box. If "a." is selected, enter the date the application was submitted to the State.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Arkansas | California | Delaware |
| District of Columbia | Florida | Georgia |
| Iowa | Kentucky | Maine |
| Maryland | Michigan | Missouri |
| Nevada | New Hampshire | North Dakota |
| Rhode Island | South Carolina | Texas |
| Utah | West Virginia | American Samoa |
| Guam | North Mariana Islands | Puerto Rico |
| | Virgin Islands | |

20. (Required) Select the appropriate box. We cannot make a grant if you are delinquent on Federal debt. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit disallowances, loans and taxes. If yes, include an explanation on a continuation sheet.

21. The SF-424 must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant’s organization, the organization that will manage the project if a grant is awarded. An authorized representative is one capable of obligating the organization. You must include evidence that the signer is authorized to obligate the organization - no exceptions. Remember that even for large organizations in the public eye, we have no administratively practical way of confirming the name, title, or authority of the various people who have the legal ability to obligate your organization. Place the evidence behind the SF-424 and *Site Worksheet* under Tab A. Applications submitted without evidence that the person who signed the SF-424 is so authorized will be returned as ineligible. Also, matching funds must be documented under Tab E-3 – Leveraging. A signature on the SF 424 does not constitute documentation in form and substance satisfactory to the Agency. All correspondence will be sent to the contact person shown in block 8. The address and contact information provided in this block will be used only if it duplicates block 8 or if block 8 is left blank. (Required) To be signed and dated by the authorized representative of the applicant organization. Enter the name (First and last name required) title (Required), telephone number (Required), fax number, and email address (Required) of the person authorized to sign for the applicant. A copy of the governing body’s authorization for you to sign this application as the official representative must be on file in the applicant’s office. (Certain Federal agencies may require that this authorization be submitted as part of the application.)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0043), Washington, DC 20503.

Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants

Reproduction of OMB No. 1890-0014 EXP 02/28/09

Purpose: The Federal government is committed to ensuring that all qualified applicants, small or large, non-religious or faith-based, have an equal opportunity to compete for Federal funding. In order for us to better understand the population of applicants for Federal funds, we are asking nonprofit private organizations (not including private universities) to fill out this survey.

Upon receipt, the survey will be separated from the application. Information provided on the survey will not be considered in any way in making funding decisions and will not be included in the Federal grants database. While your help in this data collection process is greatly appreciated, completion of this survey is voluntary.

Instructions for Submitting the Survey: If you are applying using a hard copy application, please place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it along with your application package. If you are applying electronically, please submit this survey along with your application.

Applicant's (Organization) Name: _____

Applicant's DUNS Number: _____

Federal Program: Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program **CFDA Number 10.855**

1. Has the applicant ever received a grant or contract from the Federal government?

Yes No

2. Is the applicant a faith-based organization?

Yes No (Self-Identify)

3. Is the applicant a secular organization?

Yes No (Self-Identify)

4. Does the applicant have 501(c)(3) status? (501(c)(3) status is a legal designation provided on application to the Internal Revenue Service by eligible organizations. Some grant programs may require non-profit applicants to have 501(c)(3) status. Others do not.

Yes No

5. Is the applicant a local affiliate of a national organization?

Yes No (Self-Explanatory)

6. How many full-time equivalent employees does the applicant have? (Check only one box.) For example, two part-time employees who each work half-time equal one full-time equivalent employee. If the applicant is a local affiliate of a national organization, the responses to questions 2 and 3 should reflect the staff and budget size of the local affiliate.

3 or fewer 15-50
 4-5 51-100
 6-14 over 100

7. What is the size of the applicant's annual budget? (Check only one box.) Annual Budget means the amount of money your organization spends each year on all such activities.

less than \$150,000
 \$150,000 - \$299,999
 \$300,000 - \$499,999
 \$500,000 - \$999,999
 \$1,000,000 - \$4,999,999
 \$5,000,000 or more

Paperwork Burden Statement:

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1890-0014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average five (5) minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to the Agency Contact listed in this grant application.**

Reproduction of OMB No. 1890-0014 Exp. 02/28/09

2011 DLT Project Overall Budget Worksheet

(See D-1 and D-2 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

| Line Item No. ¹ | Site Name ² | Description | Unit Cost | No. | Extended Cost | DLT % of Use ³ |
|---|---|-------------|-----------|-----|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | | |
| 7. | | | | | | |
| 8. | | | | | | |
| 9. | | | | | | |
| 10. | | | | | | |
| 11. | | | | | | |
| 12. | | | | | | |
| 13. | | | | | | |
| 14. | | | | | | |
| 15. | | | | | | |
| 16. | | | | | | |
| 17. | | | | | | |
| 18. | | | | | | |
| 19. | | | | | | |
| 20. | | | | | | |
| 21. | | | | | | |
| 22. | | | | | | |
| 23. | | | | | | |
| 24. | | | | | | |
| 25. | | | | | | |
| Overall DLT Project Budget – Page 1 Subtotal → | | | | | | |
| Budget Summary | | | | | | |
| A. | (Sum of page 1 and continuation sheets subtotals) Overall DLT Project Budget⁴ | | | | | |
| B. | (as documented under Tab E-3) Less Proposed Cash Match⁵ | | | | | |
| C. | (documented under Tab E-3 & In-Kind Match Worksheet) Less Proposed In-Kind Match⁵ | | | | | |
| D. | (from <i>Other Funds Worksheet</i>) Less Other Funds | | | | | |
| E. | DLT Grant Request (A – B – C – D = E) | | | | | |

1. Use the line-item number established on the *Overall Budget Worksheet(s)* on the other budget worksheets. If line-item 16 on the *Overall Budget Sheet* is ineligible, show it as item 16 on the *Other Funds Worksheet*. Don't start a new numbering system on each sheet.
2. For non-fixed site applications, show the operational service center out of which the financed equipment will operate.
3. This number refers to the % of use that meets the DLT Grant definition of distance learning or telemedicine, the portion eligible for either grant or match funding. Ineligible items or items for which no funding is requested are shown as zero %, regardless of their use in the project.
4. Line A is the sum of all DLT project extended costs as shown on this page and any continuation sheets. It includes the grant request and all proposed matches, as well as ineligible funds that have been included in the budget.
5. **Matching funds (lines B & C) must be properly documented under Tab E-3 of your application as described in detail in the *Application Guide*. Any portion that is not documented will not be credited as an eligible match.**

Place this Worksheet under Tab D-2 of your Application

2011 Site Worksheet - Fixed Sites (Attachment to SF 424)

(See A, D-1 and D-2 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

- Column 1. For each Hub, combined Hub/End-User, and End-User site, show its complete official name (and abbreviation should you choose to use one). Each site name (or abbreviation) must be used consistently throughout the balance of your application. Below the site name, show the complete street address. The address must be one that can be positively identified as described in the *Application Guide*. If the only address available for a site is a PO Box, Star Route, Rural Route, or other address not locatable on a map, give that address supplemented by the precise latitude and longitude.
- Column 2. For each site, show how you designate the site. *i.e.*, as a Hub, a Hub/End-User, or End-User.
- Column 3. Show the County in which the site is located
- Column 4. Show the School District in which the site is located.
- Column 5. Show the Congressional District in which the site is located (example: MI 57th Dist., John Smith.)

| | 1. Complete Site Name (Abbreviation, if any) Complete Street Address (DD/MM/SS or DD.DDDD if needed, see instructions) | 2. Site Designation | 3. County | 4. School District | 5. Congressional District |
|---|---|----------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | |

You are not restricted to 5 sites. A continuation sheet follows this page. If you have many sites, use as many continuation sheets as you need.

Place this sheet behind SF-424 under Tab A of your Application

2011 Rurality Worksheet – Fixed Sites

(For more complete guidance in completing this sheet, see E-1 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

| Category | Population | Points |
|---|-----------------|--------|
| Exceptionally Rural – Any area of the US NOT included within the boundary of a Census Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster having a population in excess of 5,000 . This includes Urban Clusters between 2500 and 5000 as well as Census Rural Areas. | 5000 or fewer | 45 |
| Rural – Any area of the US included within the boundary of a Census Urban Cluster having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 . | 5001 - 10,000 | 30 |
| Mid-Rural - Any area of the United States included within the boundary of a Census Urban Cluster over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 . | 10,001 - 20,000 | 15 |
| Urban Area - Any area of the United States included within the boundary of any Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster in excess of 20,000 . | 20,001 or more | 0 |

Enter each site (hub, hub/end-user, or end-user) in the table below. Place pure hubs at the beginning of the list separated by a space and exclude them from your estimated *Rurality* score. To document, attach Census maps and data sheets for each site as described in the *Application Guide*. For each site in a Census Designated Urbanized Area (UA) or Urban Cluster (UC), enter the designation and population, then enter points from the table above based on the population. For each site located in a Census Designated Rural (CR) area, show the population as “<2500” and enter 45 points. Note – The population for sites in Census Rural areas should be shown as “<2500” because there is no specific population associated with such an area. **Any end-user site without verifiable census documentation will be evaluated as urban (zero points)**. Remember that your sites must be consistent throughout the application including on the *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets*, the *Site Worksheet*, the *Executive Summary*, the *Telecommunications System Plan*, and the *Budget*. **If the end-user sites are not consistent, your application is unscorable and will be returned as ineligible.**

| | Site Name (Location) <small>(Same numbering and order as <i>Site & NSLP Worksheets</i>)</small> | Site Type <small>(Hub, etc.)</small> | Census Designation | Census Population | Rurality Points |
|---|--|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Applicant’s Estimated Rurality Score <small>(Sum of Rurality Points ÷ # of End-User Sites)</small> | | Rurality Score <small>(For Agency Use)</small> | |
|--|--|--|--|

You are not restricted to 5 sites. A continuation sheet follows this page. If you have many sites, use as many continuation sheets as you need. Be sure to indicate your estimated *Rurality* score for all end-user sites on this sheet.

Place this sheet and Census documentation under Tab E-1 of your Application

Rurality Worksheet – Fixed Sites (Continuation)

| | Site Name (Location) (Same numbering and order as <i>Site & NSLP Worksheets</i> . Number consecutively from previous sheet) | Site Type (Hub, etc.) | Census Designation | Census Population | Rurality Points |
|----|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 6 | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | |
| 18 | | | | | |
| 19 | | | | | |
| 20 | | | | | |

Place *Rurality Worksheets* and Census Documentation under Tab E-1 of your Application

2011 NSLP Worksheet – Fixed Sites

(For more complete guidance in completing this sheet, see E-2 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

| Decision Table | | Is site Eligible for NSLP? | Use NSLP % for Specific School | Use NSLP % for School District where site located |
|--|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Type of End-User | | | | |
| Public School (K-12) | Yes | Yes | No | |
| Private Non Profit School (K-12) | Yes | Yes | No | |
| A College or Other Educ. Org. | No | No | Yes | |
| All Others - Hospital, Public Library, Clinic, etc. | N/A | No | Yes | |

| Scoring Table | | Points |
|--------------------|--|--------|
| NSLP Eligibility % | | |
| NSLP < 25% | | Zero |
| 25% ≤ NSLP < 50% | | 15 |
| 50% ≤ NSLP < 75% | | 25 |
| NSLP ≥ 75% | | 35 |

Enter each site in the table below placing them in the same order as on the *Site Worksheet and Rurality Worksheet*. Identify the site by type. Provide data for hubs. Place pure hubs at the beginning of the list separated by a space and do not include them in your estimated *NSLP* score. The Decision Table above shows whether to enter specific school or district information for each site. Remember that your sites must be consistent throughout the application. If the end-user sites are not consistent, your application is unscorable and will be returned as ineligible.

Any site without verifiable documentation attached behind this Worksheet will be evaluated at zero percent eligibility. The Agency will not research undocumented data. Applicants must provide documentation for each site's percentage with a written certification from the organization that administers the NSLP in your area that the data are accurate and the most recent available. Some official NSLP data is posted on state websites. If so, you may provide printouts from these sites. Data from unofficial websites is not acceptable. Please highlight the relevant data on the attached documentation.

| | Site Name (Same numbering and order as <i>Site & Rurality Worksheets</i>) | Site Type (Hub, etc.) | Total Students | % Eligible (See Attached) |
|---|---|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |
| Average NSLP (Sum of NSLP Percentages ÷ # of Sites) | | | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Applicant's Estimated NSLP Score (Enter Points from Scoring Table) | |
|--|--|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| NSLP Score (for Agency Use) | |
|---------------------------------------|--|

You are not restricted to 5 sites. A continuation sheet follows this page. If you have more sites, use as many continuation sheets as you need. Be sure to indicate your estimated NSLP score for all end-user sites on this sheet.

Place this sheet and certified NSLP documentation under Tab E-2 of your Application

NSLP Worksheet - Fixed Sites (Continuation)

| | Site Name (Same numbering and order as <i>Site & Rurality Worksheets</i>) | Site Type (Hub, etc.) | Total Students | % Eligible (See Attached) |
|----|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |
| 13 | | | | |
| 14 | | | | |
| 15 | | | | |
| 16 | | | | |
| 17 | | | | |
| 18 | | | | |
| 19 | | | | |
| 20 | | | | |

Place *NSLP Worksheets* and supporting documentation under Tab E-2 of your Application

2011 Site Worksheet - Non-Fixed Sites (Attachment to SF 424)

Use the **Non-Fixed Worksheets only if your application is for a non-fixed site project - ambulance, visiting nurse, etc.)**

(For more complete guidance in completing this worksheet, refer to D-1 and D-2 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

Column 1 - Identify the operational service center site(s) and the service territory over which the service operates. For each service center **site**, show its precise address and provide a brief description of the nature of the facility. The address must be one that can be positively identified as described in the *Application Guide*. If the only address available for a site is a PO Box, Star Route, Rural Route, or other address not locatable on a map, give that address supplemented by the precise latitude and longitude (DD/MM/SS or DD.DDDD). For example, an ambulance service would show the address of and describe its emergency vehicle operations center. A visiting nurse project would show the central hospital or VNA offices from which it operates the service.

For the **service territory**, attach a detail map (as described in the *Application Guide*) showing the location of the service center and the defined boundary within which the service is offered from that center. (If the service territory is not defined, we cannot score the application, which makes it ineligible for funding.) Enter a narrative description of the service territory using as many blocks as appropriate showing the information relevant to the described territory in columns 3, 4, & 5. If the service operates multiple, autonomous, and operationally independent territories, show each physical service center and its associated service territory separately.

Columns 2-4 - Show the relevant County, School District, and Congressional District Data associated with the sites and territory listed.

| | 1. Sites and Service Territory (attach Detail Map) For Service Center Sites , complete Street Address with Brief Description (DD/MM/SS or DD.DDDD, if needed, see <i>Application Guide</i>) For Service Territory , a narrative Description that is related to Detail Map | 2. County | 3. School District | 4. Congressional. District |
|---|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |

You are not restricted to these lines. A continuation sheet follows this page. Use as many as you need.

Place this sheet behind SF-424 under Tab A of your Application

2011 Rurality Worksheet – Non-Fixed Sites

Use the Non-Fixed Worksheets only if your application is for a non-fixed site project - ambulance, VNA, etc.

(For more complete guidance in completing this sheet, refer to E-1 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

| Category | Population | Points |
|---|-----------------|--------|
| Exceptionally Rural – Any area of the US NOT included within the boundary of a Census Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster having a population in excess of 5,000 . This includes Urban Clusters between 2500 and 5000 as well as Census Rural Areas. | 5000 or fewer | 45 |
| Rural – Any area of the US included within the boundary of a Census Urban Cluster having a population over 5,000 and not in excess of 10,000 . | 5001 - 10,000 | 30 |
| Mid-Rural - Any area of the United States included within the boundary of a Census Urban Cluster over 10,000 and not in excess of 20,000 . | 10,001 - 20,000 | 15 |
| Urban Area - Any area of the United States included within the boundary of any Urbanized Area or Urban Cluster in excess of 20,000 . | 20,001 or more | 0 |

Projects not based on an officially defined service territory documented by Census data can not be scored and will be returned as ineligible. Place each **Census Designated Urbanized Area (UA)** and **Urban Cluster (UC)** in the service territory on an individual row in column 1, enter the Census Designation in column 2, and attach Census data printouts showing the population of each in column 3. From the table above, enter points in column five based on the population of the UA or UC. Enter the entire population of the UA or UC in column 4 unless you have demonstrated in your application that your defined service territory excludes part of the UA or UC. (See the *Application Guide* for additional guidance.) If you have so demonstrated, enter the portion you serve in Column 4. Enter the **Census Rural (CR, below 2500)** population(s) separately as appropriate and provide census data sheets to support the number(s). For Census Rural population(s), enter 45 points in column 5. Enter the product of columns 4 and 5 in column 6. Divide the sum of column 6 by the sum of column 4 to obtain your estimated score.

| | 1. Service Territory Population Centers (List each Urbanized Area & Urban Cluster on a separate line. Show Census Rural Area(s) separately.) | 2. Census Designation | 3. Census Population | 4. Population in Service Territory | 5. Rurality Points | 6. Product (4 X 5 = 6) |
|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | |
| Sum Rows 1-5 of columns 4 & 6 ► (include any additional rows from continuation sheets) | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Applicant's Estimated Rurality Score (Sum of Column 6 ÷ Sum of Column 4) | | Rurality Score (For Agency Use) | |
|--|--|---|--|

A continuation sheet follows this page. Use as many as you need.

Place this sheet and Census documentation under Tab E-1 of your Application

2011 NSLP Worksheet – Non-Fixed Sites

Use the Non-Fixed Worksheets only if your application is for a non-fixed site project - ambulance, VNA, etc.
 (For more complete guidance in completing this sheet, refer to E-2 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

| Scoring Table | |
|--------------------|--------|
| NSLP Eligibility % | Points |
| NSLP < 25% | Zero |
| 25% ≤ NSLP < 50% | 15 |
| 50% ≤ NSLP < 75% | 25 |
| NSLP ≥ 75% | 35 |

In column 1, enter the name of each School District into which the service offered by the applicant extends, whether that area coincides with the entire School District in whole or in part. Enter the number of students in that district and the percentage that are eligible for the National School Lunch Program in columns 2 and 3.

Any site without verifiable documentation attached behind this Worksheet will be evaluated at zero percent eligibility. The Agency will not research undocumented data. Applicants must provide documentation of each school district's percentage with a written certification from the organization that administers the NSLP in your area that the data are accurate and the most recent available. Some official NSLP data is posted on state websites. If so, you may provide printouts from these websites. Data from unofficial websites is not acceptable. Please highlight the relevant data on the attached documentation.

| | School District Name | Total Students | % Eligible (See Attached) |
|---|----------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| Average NSLP (Sum of NSLP Percentages ÷ # of School Districts) | | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Applicant's Estimated NSLP Score (Enter Points from Scoring Table) | |
|--|--|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| NSLP Score (for Agency Use) | |
|---------------------------------------|--|

A continuation sheet follows this page. Use as many as you need. Be sure to include continuation sheet data in the average.

Place this sheet and supporting documentation under Tab E-2 of your Application

NSLP Worksheet – Non-Fixed Sites (Continuation)

| | School District Name | Total Students | % Eligible (See Attached) |
|----|----------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | | | |
| 11 | | | |
| 12 | | | |
| 13 | | | |
| 14 | | | |
| 15 | | | |
| 16 | | | |
| 17 | | | |
| 18 | | | |
| 19 | | | |
| 20 | | | |

Place *NSLP Worksheets* and supporting documentation under Tab E-2 of your Application

2011 Leveraging Worksheet

(Matching Funds – For more complete guidance, see E-3 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

- The applicant must demonstrate an eligible match of at least 15% of the grant request.
- To be credited, the proposed match must be for eligible purposes. If the Agency cannot fund an item if it were in the grant request, we cannot accept it as match.
- As an applicant, you submit a proposed match and estimated score. The eligibility of the match and actual score is determined by the Agency.
- You must document your matching funds as described in the *Application Guide*. Place letters of financial commitment and other match documentation along with this form under TAB E-3 of your application package. Each donor’s match as listed below must be supported by a matching letter. If you have more than ten donors, use another copy of this sheet and label it “continuation.”

Matches not properly documented behind this Sheet under Tab E-3 will not be credited. Depending on the consequent reduction of your match, this could lower your score or make your project ineligible (i.e., if resultant match is < 15%)

| Eligible Match ÷ Eligible Grant Request (%) | Points |
|---|--------|
| $15\% < \text{Match \%} \leq 30\%$ | 0 |
| $30\% < \text{Match \%} \leq 50\%$ | 15 |
| $50\% < \text{Match \%} \leq 75\%$ | 25 |
| $75\% < \text{Match \%} \leq 100\%$ | 30 |
| Match > 100% | 35 |

| Donor <small>(place documentation letter from each donor, including the applicant, behind this sheet)</small> | Proposed Match |
|---|-----------------------|
| <i>i.</i> | \$ |
| <i>ii.</i> | \$ |
| <i>iii.</i> | \$ |
| <i>iv.</i> | \$ |
| <i>v.</i> | \$ |
| <i>vi.</i> | \$ |
| <i>vii.</i> | \$ |
| <i>viii.</i> | \$ |
| <i>ix.</i> | \$ |
| <i>x.</i> | \$ |
| 1. Total proposed matching contributions (sum of <i>i</i> thru <i>x</i>): | \$ |
| 2. Total DLT Grant requested: | \$ |
| 3. Match as Percent of Grant Request (Line1 ÷ Line 2 • 100%): | % |

| | |
|--|---|
| Applicant’s Estimated <i>Leveraging Score</i> <small>(Enter Points from Scoring Table)</small> | <i>Leveraging Score</i> <small>(For Agency Use)</small> |
|--|---|

Place this sheet and supporting documentation under Tab E-3 of your Application

2011 EZ Worksheet

(USDA Empowerment Zone Worksheet)
 (See Section E-4 of the *Application Guide*)

If any of your sites are located in a USDA Empowerment Zone, your application may be eligible for points in this category. Check the official website shown below for USDA designated areas. Ten points can be earned if at least 1 end-user site is in an Empowerment Zone. (Additional sites located in that or another Empowerment Zone do not earn additional points.) The maximum score an applicant can earn in this category is ten points for having at least one site in an Empowerment Zone.

(Important Note: In prior years, up to 10 points were awarded under this category for sites located in designated USDA Enterprise Communities (EC) and Champion Communities (CC). These designations are no longer in effect. See Section E-4 of the *Application Guide* for details about this change.

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/BCP-EZECList.doc>

List end-user sites that are in an Empowerment Zone in the table below. Any end-user site shown on this *Worksheet* must be consistent with the sites shown on the *Rurality* and *NSLP Worksheets*. To document the EZ status of the site, **place printouts from the USDA websites shown above behind this *Worksheet* under Tab E-4. If not properly documented behind this *Worksheet* under Tab E-4, no points will be awarded in this category.**

| | End-User Site Name | Empowerment Zone Name |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Applicant's Estimated EZ Score (Enter Points from Scoring Table) | |
|--|--|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| EZ Score (For Agency Use) | |
|-------------------------------------|--|

Place this sheet and supporting documentation under Tab E-4 of your Application

2011 Additional NSLP Worksheet

(See more complete information about additional NSLP, see F-1 in Section IV of the *Application Guide*)

The NSLP eligibility percentage on our *NSLP Worksheet* (Tab E-2) is: _____

If this percentage is under 50%, and you believe your NSLP eligibility percentage does not accurately reflect the economic conditions in your area compared to other areas with similar eligibility percentages, you have the option to request additional points here. (If the eligibility on your *NSLP Worksheet* is 50% or higher, but you suspect that the percentage could drop below 50% after Agency review of your application, you may also request these points. Such a request will be acted upon only if your final *NSLP eligibility* is below 50% as determined by the Agency.) Points awarded by the Agency in this category, if any, are based on the supporting information provided. Attach your supporting documentation behind this worksheet under Tab F-1.

Requests for *Additional NSLP* will not be considered if not accompanied by supporting documentation (i.e., no *Additional NSLP* points will be awarded).

I hereby request additional NSLP Points and have attached documentation behind this Worksheet to support my request.

Signature of Authorized Representative
(Same person who signed the SF - 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*)

Date

| | |
|---|--|
| Additional NSLP Points (for Agency Use) | |
|---|--|

Place this sheet and supporting documentation under Tab F-1 of your Application

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Certification

All grants made under 7 CFR 1703 are subject to the nondiscrimination provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, (7 CFR 15); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*; 7 CFR 15b); and the Age Discrimination of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101 *et seq.*; 45 CFR 90), and as amended by Executive Order 11375 Amending Executive Order 11246, Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity (3 CFR, 1966, 1970 Comp., p. 684).

As a prospective primary participant recipient of financial assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements of the above laws and executive orders to the effect that no person in the United States shall, "on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under the RUS Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Programs."

The _____ (Grantee)
hereby certifies that, as a prospective recipient under the said Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, it will comply with the above referenced laws, regulations and Executive Orders.

Date

Signature

Type or Print Name

Title

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

Certificate Regarding Architectural Barriers

All facilities financed with RUS grants that are open to the public, or in which physically handicapped persons may be employed or reside, must be designed, constructed, and/or altered to be readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons. Standards for these facilities must comply with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151 *et seq.*), and with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), (Appendix A to 41 CFR subpart 101-19.6).

As a prospective primary participant recipient of financial assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements of the above referenced law to the effect that all facilities must be readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.

The _____ (Grantee) hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant and Loan Program, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

Date

Signature

Type or Print Name

Title

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

Certificate Regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions

In accordance with 7 CFR 1788, if the project is in an area subject to flooding, flood insurance must be provided to the extent available and required under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended by the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4001-4128). If applicable, the insurance must cover, in addition to the buildings, any machinery, equipment, fixtures, and furnishings contained in the buildings. RUS will comply with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management (3 CFR, 1977 Comp., p. 117), and 7 CFR 1794.41, of this chapter in considering the application for the project.

Please check the appropriate line below:

___ a) The project is not located in a 100-year flood plain; therefore, no Flood Insurance is required.

___ b) The project is located in a 100-year flood plain and the required insurance is or will be provided by:

The _____ (Grantee) hereby certifies, that, as a prospective recipient under the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, it is in compliance, or will be in compliance during construction and/or installation of equipment and upon completion of the project, with the above referenced law.

Date

Signature

Type or Print Name

Title

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

***Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition
Policies Act of 1970 Certification***

The _____ (Grantee) assures that it will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4601-4655, and with implementing Federal regulations in 49 CFR 24 and 7 CFR 21.

Specifically, the _____ (Grantee) assures that:

Whenever Federal financial assistance is used to pay for any part of the cost of a program or project which will result in the displacement of any person;

- (a) Fair and reasonable relocation payments and assistance shall be provided to or for displaced persons in accordance with sections 202, 203, and 204 of the Uniform Act,
- (b) Relocation assistance programs offering the services described in section 205 of the Uniform Act shall be provided to displaced persons, and
- (c) Within a reasonable period of time prior to displacement, comparable replacement dwellings will be available to displaced persons in accordance with section 205(c) (3) of the Uniform Act.

Date

*Signature of President or Authorized Official of
Ultimate Recipient*

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements for Grantees Other than Individuals

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Sections 5151-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D; 41 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*), 7 CFR 3017.600.

A. The grantee certifies that it will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:

- (a) Publishing a statement notifying employees that unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;
- (b) Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
 - (1) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
 - (2) The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
 - (3) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
 - (4) The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
- (c) Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph (a);
- (d) Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph (a) that, as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will:
 - (1) Abide by the terms of the statement; and
 - (2) Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than 5 calendar days after such conviction;
- (e) Notifying the Agency in writing, within 10 calendar days after receiving notice under subparagraph (d) (2) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to every grant officer on whose grant activity the convicted employee was working, unless the Federal agency has designated a central point for the receipt of such notices. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant;

(f) Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under subparagraph (d)(2), with respect to any employee who is so convicted:

- (1) Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or
- (2) Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;

(g) Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f).

B. The grantee may insert in the space provided below the site(s) for the performance of work done in connection with the specific grant:

Place of Performance:

_____ *Street Address*

_____ *City*

_____ *County*

_____ *State*

_____ *Zip Code*

___ **Check if there are workplaces on file that are not identified here.**

_____ *Organization Name*

_____ *Name and Title of Authorized Representative*

_____ *Signature*

_____ *Date*

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

***Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility
Matters—Primary Covered Transactions***

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 7 CFR 3017.510.

- (1) The prospective primary participant certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:
- (a) are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
 - (b) have not within a 3-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
 - (c) are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1)(b) of this certification; and
 - (d) have not within a 3-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.
- (2) Where the prospective primary participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Organization Name

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

Certification Regarding Lobbying for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant or loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. (Copies of this form may be obtained from RUS.)
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Organization Name

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

Non-Duplication of Services Certificate

As a prospective primary participant recipient of assistance from RUS, this organization commits to carry out RUS' established policy to comply with the requirements that no facilities using financial assistance will duplicate adequate established telemedicine services and/or distance learning services.

The _____ (Grantee) hereby certifies that as a prospective recipient under the said Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program, that it will not use RUS grant funds to duplicate any adequate established services as referenced above.

(Note: Applicants and participants in DLT grant applications are sometimes applicants or participants in other current year applications or are sometime applicants or participants in projects that received awards in prior years. For guidance on disclosing such situation with respect to duplication of adequate established services, please refer to "Include the Following in your TSP" under D-1, *Telecommunications System Plan*, in Section IV of the *Application Guide*.)

Date

Signature

Type or Print Name

Title

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application

Environmental Impact Certification

Environmental Project Summary:

(This description should encompass all construction in the project, no matter the source of funding. It should provide details of how the project will affect the environment (wetlands, farmlands, floodplain, cultural environment, endangered species, environmental quality, and historic preservation). If additional space is needed, continue on white bond paper and attach to this certification.)

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the construction proposed in this application will not adversely impact the environment or historic preservation.

(Signature and Date)

(Print or Type Title)

Place this Certification under Tab H of your Application