

RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE  
*Telecommunications Program*

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**Rural Public Television  
Digital Transition Grant Program**

***FY 2014  
Application Guide***

**USDA**



*Committed to the future of rural communities*

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## Public Television Station Digital Transition Grant Program

This Grant Program provides funding to assist Public Television Stations serving substantial rural populations in implementing the Federal Communications Commission's mandated transition from analog to digital broadcast television transmission. Grant funds may be used to acquire, by purchase or lease, and install facilities and software necessary for the transition. Grant funds may also be used for associated engineering and environmental studies necessary for this purpose. The Grant Program can also fund equipment to facilitate local origination and management of programming.

Prior to submitting an application, all applicants must register in the **System for Award Management (SAM)**: <https://www.sam.gov/> (formerly Central Contractor Registry, (CCR)). The SAM registration must remain active with current information at all times while RUS is considering an application.

All forms, samples and certifications can be found in the “toolkit” -- a separate PDF document. Please obtain this document and use it in conjunction with this application guide to assemble your application. In addition, please review the program regulation (7 CFR 1740). Copies of this guide, the toolkit, the regulation and the announcement of the application window (Notice of Funds Availability) are all available at the Agency Web site:

[http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP\\_DTV.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DTV.html)

### **Before You Get Started**

**Please read the Regulation published in the *Federal Register* on January 20, 2006 (Interim Final Rule) and August 7, 2007 (Final Rule). A copy is available at the Agency Web site:**  
[http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP\\_DTV.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DTV.html)

**This Application Guide is intended to provide practical step-by-step help to assist applicants through the process. However, should anything in this guide appear to conflict with the Regulation, the Regulation takes precedence.**

## **General Information**

### ***When and Where to Submit Your Application***

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The application deadline is:

**July 7, 2014**

An original and two copies of a **completed application** must either be hand-delivered to the Agency by this deadline, or carry evidence of having been shipped to the Agency on or before this deadline.

#### **Submit your Application to:**

Director  
Advanced Services Division  
Room 2844  
Mail Stop 1550  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250-1550

#### **Hand Delivered Applications**

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Hand-delivered applications will be accepted daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time), except Saturdays, Sundays and Federal holidays. Individuals delivering applications must provide proper identification to enter the building.

#### **Shipped Applications**

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Applications must show proof of shipping by the deadline consisting of one of the following:

1. A legible U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark;
2. A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS; or
3. A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

Applicants should note that the USPS does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with the post office. For applications sent through the USPS, neither of the following is acceptable as proof of mailing:

1. A private metered postmark; or
2. Any other receipt not dated by the USPS.

## **Electronic Applications**

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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](http://www.grants.gov)

If you want to submit an application on-line, please obtain all the necessary sign-ups, credentials and authorizations **well in advance of the deadline**. You will need a System for Award Management (SAM) 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 ensure that your credentials and authorizations are up to date if you went through the process within the last year. Some or all of Grants.gov's requirements require an annual update.

Applicants to other Agency grant programs have experienced difficulty in submitting their applications through Grants.gov, due to unanticipated server downtime. We strongly encourage you to have a back-up plan to ship the required number of copies to us by the deadline, if Grants.gov does not accept your application.

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). Agency staffers do not control the technical aspects of Grants.gov and won't be able to help you if you experience a problem. However, we are happy to answer questions about the Program and the contents of an application.

**Applications not received or shipped by the deadline will not be considered for funding and will be returned.**

## ***Key Definitions***

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Please refer to the Regulation (7 CFR 1740) for all defined terms.

***Core coverage area*** is the set of counties fully covered, or at least 75% covered, by a digital television transmitter or translator.

***Coverage contour area*** is the area estimated to receive a digital television signal from a transmitter or translator of 41 dB $\mu$  for UHF signals, 36 dB $\mu$  for channel 7-13 signals, or 28 dB $\mu$  for channel 2-6 signals, as shown on the public television station's Service Contour Area filed with the FCC.

***Digital television, or DTV***, means the digital television system the FCC has adopted to replace the analog system.

***Digital transition*** means the transition from analog television broadcasting to digital television broadcasting.

***Distance learning*** means any digital public television broadcast to a school, library, home, or other end-user site located in a rural area, for the purpose of providing educational and cultural programming.

***Grant Program*** means this Public Television Station Digital Transition Grant Program.

***High definition television, or HDTV***, means an enhanced television service which is authorized by the FCC as part of the digital television standard.

***Public television station*** means a noncommercial educational television broadcast station that serves rural areas and is qualified for Community Service Grants by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting under section 396(k) of the Communications Act of 1934.

***Rural area*** means 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 20,000 inhabitants.

***Rural population*** means the number of people within the core coverage area of a transmitter who do not live within the boundaries of an incorporated or unincorporated city, village, or borough having a population in excess of 20,000 inhabitants as calculated pursuant to Section 1740.8(c) (1).

***Rural Utilities Service, RUS, or the Agency***, is the Rural Development Telecommunications Program within the United States Department of Agriculture, which will administer this Grant Program.

***Urban area*** means any area of the United States which is not a *rural area*.

### ***Contacting the Agency***

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For additional information concerning this grant program, please contact:

USDA Rural Development - Telecommunications Program  
Advanced Services Division  
1400 Independence Avenue SW Stop 1550 – Room 2844  
Washington, DC 20250-1550

Phone        202-690-4493  
Fax            202-720-1051  
Email        rd-ptv.digital@wdc.usda.gov

Information about the Agency and its programs, including downloadable documents such as this application guide and the toolkit (which includes federal forms) may be found at:

[http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP\\_DTV.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DTV.html)

## **Applying for a Grant**

### ***Applicant Eligibility***

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To be eligible, the applicant must be a public television station that serves a rural area regardless of whether it also serves any urban area. Only stations required by the Federal Communications Commission to convert from analog to digital broadcasting are eligible.

### ***Grant Amounts***

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The maximum grant per public television station is \$750,000 in any given funding year. There is no minimum grant amount.

### ***Eligible Purposes***

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Grants may be used to install digital television facilities through purchase or lease (up to 3 years of lease costs may be funded with grant funds); and for associated engineering and environmental studies. All broadcast facilities acquired under this program must be capable of delivering both digital television (DTV, sometimes called standard definition) and high definition television (HDTV) at both the interim and final channel power authorizations. Grant funds may be used to fund facilities directly connected to the digital transition of the broadcast signal such as:

- ◆ Digital transmitters and translators
- ◆ Transmitting antennas
- ◆ New towers or improvements to existing towers necessary for antenna installation
- ◆ Tower ground infrastructure such as land, buildings, fencing, standby power, and where commercial power is unreliable, power generation and conditioning facilities
- ◆ Studio to transmitter/translator communication links
- ◆ Power upgrades of existing DTV transmitters and translators to meet FCC requirements for analog coverage replication
- ◆ Digital master control equipment to allow local control over digital content and programming



- ◆ Digital production equipment
- ◆ Multicasting and datacasting equipment
- ◆ Associated engineering and environmental studies necessary to implementation
- ◆ Subject to Agency approval, other facilities directly necessary for the digital transition of the broadcast signal.

### ***Ineligible Purposes***

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Grants shall not be used:

- ◆ To fund operations or for facilities not owned by the applicant (except for certain leased facilities as described in 7 CFR 1740).
- ◆ To expand a station's coverage area into unserved areas where such expansion is not part of the digital transition of an existing transmitter or translator.
- ◆ For ongoing station operational expenses, including but not limited to salaries, wages, and employee benefits. Station employees may engineer and install equipment funded by the grant, and such costs are eligible.
- ◆ Construction performed or expenditures made or obligated prior to the application deadline.
- ◆ For facilities funded under other grants.

### ***Matching Funds***

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No matching funds are required under this program.

## Completing the Grant Application

This section describes all of the information necessary to prepare a complete application:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| A. Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424 | E. FCC Authorization                                      |
| B. Evidence of Eligibility                    | F. Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations |
| C. Project Description                        | G. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation         |
| D. Scoring Documentation                      |   |

### ***A. Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424***

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Complete this form and attach a resolution of the **board of the directors** (or governing body) of the public television station. A copy of Standard Form 424 is provided in the toolkit.

### ***B. Evidence of Eligibility***

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The Applicant must provide evidence demonstrating that it meets the definition of a public television station. For the purpose of this Program, a public television station must meet both 1 and either 2a or 2b:

1. Qualifies for Federal funding under Section 396(k) of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967.
2. And which is **either**:
  - a. Under the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission in effect on November 2, 1978, eligible to be licensed as a noncommercial educational broadcast station and which is owned and operated by a public agency or nonprofit private foundation, corporation, or association; or
  - b. Owned and operated by a municipality and which transmits only noncommercial programs for education purposes

## C. Project Description

The applicant shall provide a description of the project including:

- Executive Summary
- Project Cost Spreadsheet
- Project Coverage Maps
- Complete Narrative Description

1. Executive Summary -- This provides a brief description of the entire project and should not exceed two pages.

2. Project Cost Spreadsheet -- This spreadsheet details all the estimated costs associated with the project and the source of the funding (including all other funding such as station funds and other Federal funds) so that the Agency can determine that all costs financed with Program Grant funds are for eligible purposes. The following Sample Budget is a simplified example of a project cost spreadsheet. It is illustrative of one approach, not a required format.

<b>Total Project Cost</b>			
<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Cost</u>	
Suchet Industries DTV1 Transmitter		\$ 14.50	
Nighy Broadcast Antenna		22.48	
Thaw HD Digital Camera		5.00	
Brett-Hardwicke Digital Editing Console		37.00	
Tower	Materials & Installation	125.70	
Installation of studio equipment		24.50	
Installation of transmitter and antenna	Install Trans.& Antenna	39.87	
Studio to Transmitter Cable & Tower Site Power Feed	Furnish and Install	16.50	
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>\$285.55</b>	

3. Project Core Coverage Area Map(s) -- These maps show the core coverage area(s) which are included in the grant project and how they were determined from the applicant's proposed digital coverage contour area(s). Rurality and Economic Need scores are derived from statistical data for the counties included in the core coverage area for only those transmitters/translators included for funding in the

application. The core coverage area is derived from the station's coverage contour map, available on this FCC website: <http://transition.fcc.gov/mb/video/tvq.html> Since the FCC no longer generates new census tiger maps for coverage contours, the FCC TV query website now features other versions of contour maps that applicants must use to show their coverage contour. One map type is the “service contour on Google map”, but that map does not show county lines, which are essential for determining the core coverage area. The other map type is the “KML file” (KML = keyhole markup language). The kml file can be opened with Google Earth. Google Earth (regular version, not pro version) can be downloaded for free from this website: <http://www.google.com/earth/index.html>. Once it has been installed, click on the kml file to see the contour on a Google Earth map. The kml file will show names of counties and county borders. If names and borders are not shown, make sure that under the layer menu (on the left of page) the “borders and label” box is checked. In cases of large contours covering many counties, it may also be necessary to zoom in on the map until the borders are visible.

The core coverage area is the set of counties that are either entirely within the appropriate coverage contour, or are at least 75% (by area) within the contour. For contours where counties are very large with respect to coverage, as might be the case for some western states and for most translators, there may be only one county within the coverage contour. In such cases, this county is the station's core coverage area. Every transmitter and translator must have a core coverage area consisting of one or more counties. If the only coverage contour area on file is the analog contour, that analog coverage contour area may be used because digital coverage should replicate the analog coverage.

For translators, the coverage contour area may be based on the first available of the following: a computer-generated contour of the proposed digital translator, the coverage of the analog translator, or another mechanism. If the applicant uses another mechanism, it should explain that estimate in the application. The Agency reserves the right to accept or modify an applicant's estimated coverage contour area for a translator.

4. Complete Narrative Description -- This describes the entire digital transition project in detail. Among the details to include are:

- a. A description of facilities and equipment to be purchased and constructed.
- b. A timeline showing the introduction of digital service and the phase-out of analog service.
- c. Any explanations necessary for understanding the cost spreadsheet and maps.

## ***D. Scoring Documentation***

All complete applications from eligible applicants that meet the application deadline will be scored in a competitive process to determine which projects are funded. There are three scoring categories. The first is rurality, a measure of the rural character of the applicant's digital television coverage area. Up to 50 points can be earned in this category. The second category is a measure of the economic need of the people in the applicant's coverage area. This category earns up to 25 points. Finally, up to 25 points can be awarded based on critical need.

### **Three Scoring Categories Totaling 100 Points**

- Rurality up to **50** Points
- Economic Need up to **25** Points
- Critical Need up to **25** Points

1. Rurality -- Applicants shall calculate their rurality score and provide supporting documentation for evaluation by the Agency. The supporting documentation shall include maps and worksheets showing the core coverage area and the parts of that area that are considered urban in this program (i.e., with population over 20,000). The applicant shall provide the population of the core coverage area broken into rural and urban totals. For transmitters and translators that cover more than one county, this is based on simple sums of all included counties' total and urban populations. For applications where there is more than one translator or transmitter, the core coverage area is the sum of the core coverage areas of all transmitters and translators included in the application. The applicant should calculate the rurality score based on simple sums of all included counties total and urban populations (but avoid double counting any areas that occur more than once). Also, if any of this information is prepared by or with the assistance of people not directly employed by the applicant (such as a consultant), the applicant shall state the details of this assistance.

The formula for finding the rurality score is:

$$100 \times ((\text{total population} - \text{urban population}) / \text{total population}) - 50$$

Instructions for correct census data website are provided in the next section.

Instructions for looking up population data on census website

The link to the current census factfinder website is: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>. You must use the population data from the year 2010, which is a change from last year. Instructions for finding the population data is found below.

Start at <http://factfinder2.census.gov>. On the left hand side of the screen, under “community facts”, there is a box where you can enter the name of a city or county that you would like to look up. If the city or county is a name that exists in more than one U.S. location, a drop down menu will be displayed. Be sure you choose the correct location from the drop down menu (if the name of the city or county that you are looking for is not displayed in the drop down menu, type the name of the city or county and then the name of the county or state directly in the box, separated by a comma). Click on “go”. The search will result in a new page displaying the population data for the specific city or county from the 2010 census.

We emphasize that applicants *must use 2010 data for population*.

**Urban areas that straddle the boundary of a coverage contour boundary for a transmitter are considered fringe service areas and are excluded from the core coverage area. Urban areas outside the coverage contour area are also excluded, even if the county they are within becomes part of the core coverage area because over 75% of its area is within the coverage contour.**

A core coverage area that includes no urban areas will receive a score of 50 points. A core coverage area with a total population of 20,000 or less cannot possibly contain an urban area, so it receives a score of 50 points. Here are some examples of hypothetical computations:

Core Coverage Area Populations		Score
Total Population	Urban Population	
72,000	21,000	20.8
148,000	64,000	6.8
100,000	57,000	0
145,000	22,000	34.8
51,000	No Urban	50
260,000	20,001	42.3

2. Economic Need -- The economic need of the project is found by averaging the National School Lunch Program eligibility percentage rates of all school districts within core coverage area of the project. For purposes of this program, the NSLP percentage reflects the percentage of students **eligible** for reduced-price or free lunches for each area served by an end-user site, **not the percentage of actual participation.**

The NSLP is a Federally-assisted program that provides 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 subsidies 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.

Applicants must document each school district'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 (for example a letter from the school district). Some official NSLP data is posted on state and/or local governmental websites. If so, you may provide printouts from these official sites. The official website from which those printouts are obtained must be provided either on the printout or on a cover page, so that we can verify the information. If you provide only a web address, with no data, you have not documented your data and your application is incomplete. Printouts without evidence of source are considered incomplete. Finally, data from unofficial sites, such as commercial websites that report information about schools for many states, are frequently out-of-date and/or unreliable, so they are not acceptable.

To find the NSLP average, the applicant needs to obtain the NSLP eligibility percentage for every school district that is represented within the counties in the core coverage area. Once a percentage has been obtained for each school district, the Economic Need score is based on the simple average of these NSLP percentages. Remember, an urban area outside of the coverage contour or on the boundary of a coverage contour area is disregarded for rurality scoring purposes, and it is disregarded for economic need scoring as well.

For applications where there is more than one translator or transmitter, the core coverage area is the sum of the core coverage areas of all transmitters and translators included in the application. The applicant should calculate the NSLP average based on percentages for every school district that is represented in the sum of the core coverage areas (and avoid double counting any school districts that occur more than once).

The formula for finding the NSLP score is:

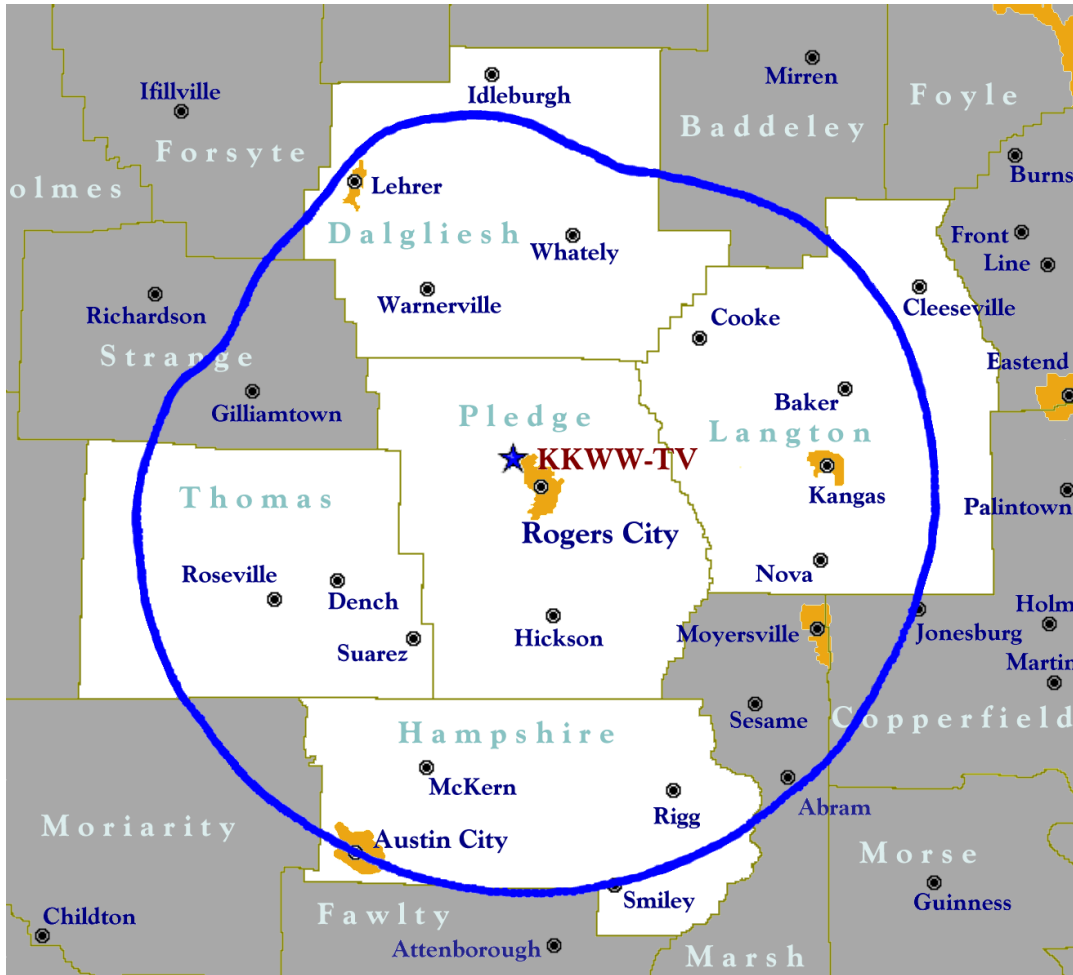
If only one school district:  $(\text{NSLP \%} * 100 - 25) / 2 = \text{Economic Need Score}$

If more than one school district:  $(\text{average NSLP \%} * 100 - 25) / 2 = \text{Economic Need Score}$

**You may obtain the NSLP percentage from the state or local organization that administers the program. That organization must certify the percentage as correct. The application must contain both that certification and contact information for the source or you may instead provide a link to the specific website source.**



## Transmitter Example



Below is a sample calculation that demonstrates how to calculate the rurality and economic need calculations. Real-world calculations are likely to be more complicated but the concept is unchanged.

Imagine a transmitter covering Rogers City in Pledge County, and surrounding areas. The coverage contour area (<http://www.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/audio/tvq.html>) is shown by the blue line. The service area includes parts of ten counties and contains two areas with population in excess of 20,000. The rural population is the difference between the total population and the urban population in an area.

First, Austin City, since it straddles the coverage contour area boundary, is disregarded from the rurality and economic need computations. Rogers City has a population of 24,000. Five of the ten counties clearly are not 75% covered by the

Rogers City transmitter. The remaining 5 counties are about 75% or more covered by the transmitter and this five county area is defined as the core coverage area.

To find the rurality score, visit the American Factfinder Web site and look up the Factsheets for the five counties. Find also the Factsheet for the urban area, Rogers City.

Pledge County population:	79,000
Langton County population	54,000
Hampshire County population	48,000
Thomas County population	82,000
Dalgliesh County population	56,000

Therefore, the total population of the core coverage area is 319,000.

The total urban population, which can also be called the total of urban populations, is 24,000. There is only one urban town in the core coverage area, Rogers City. There are several towns in the core coverage area that have populations of 20,000 or less. Cumulatively, these towns may have a total population of well over 20,000. But for a town to be considered urban it must have a population of over 20,000.

The rurality score for this project is  $100 * ((319,000 - 24,000) / 319,000) - 50 = 42.5$

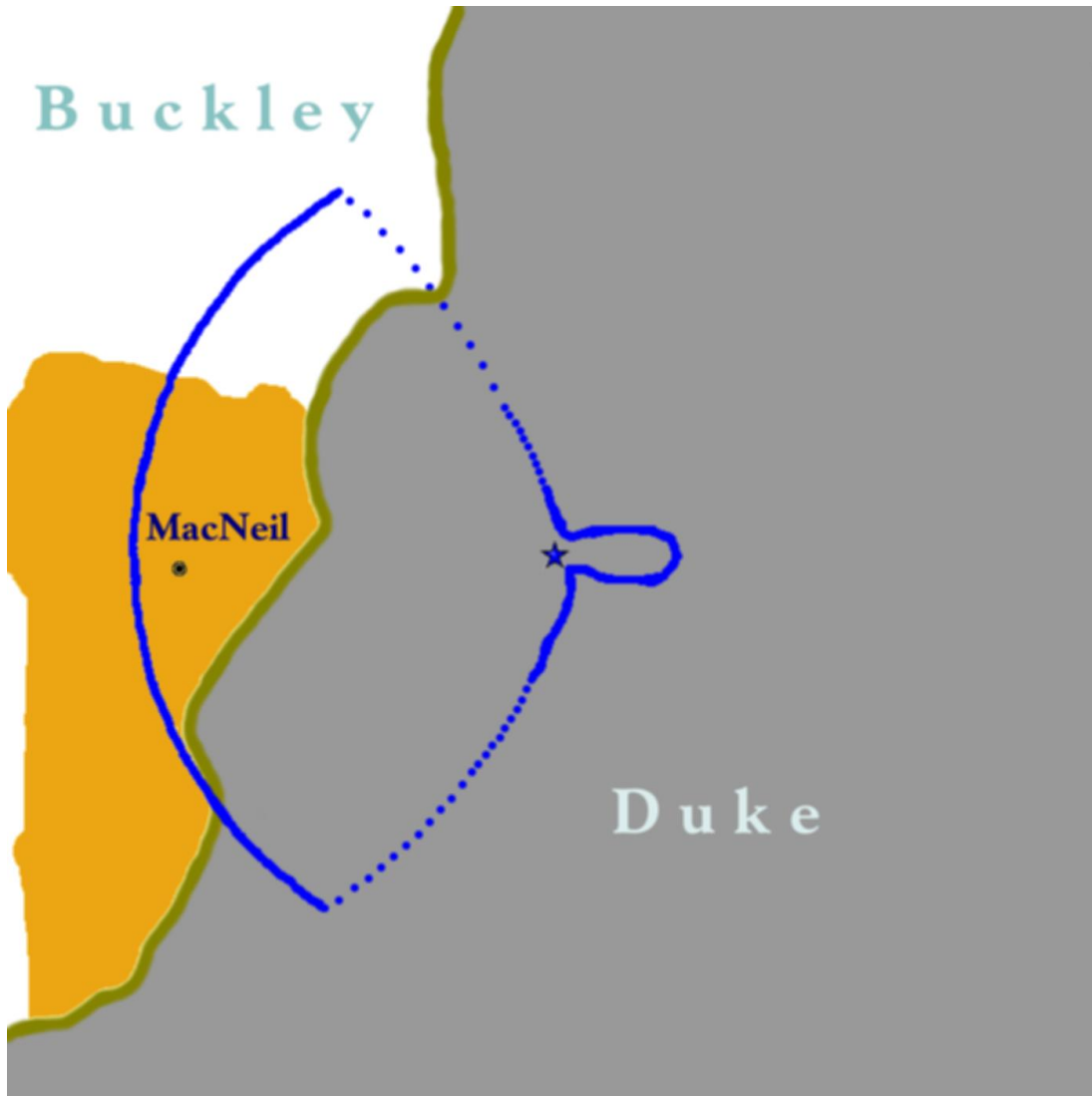
There are six school districts in the core coverage area. Each county has a county school district, and Rogers City has one. Again, the school district serving Austin City is disregarded because its city limits intersect the coverage contour area boundary and we thus consider it a fringe coverage area. Here are the school district NSLP eligibility scores:

Pledge County NSLP	47%
Langton County NSLP	39%
Hampshire County NSLP	63%
Thomas County NSLP	58%
Dalgliesh County NSLP	42%
Rogers City NSLP	46%

The average NSLP is 49.2%

The economic need score for this project is  $(49.2% * 100 - 25) / 2 = 12.1$ .

## Translator Example



Calculating the rurality and economic need scores for a translator is similar to that of a transmitter, once the core coverage area has been defined.

Starting with the service contour map at the TVQuery site (<http://www.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/audio/tvq.html>), determine the counties served by the translator. It is possible that 75% of no county is served by a translator. At least one county must be designated as the translator's core coverage area. Generally, translators cover one or more clusters of population, which may be in more than one county. The core coverage area must include the primary community served by the translator. If the primary community of service is located in two counties, both counties must be

included in the core coverage area. If the translator is located between two communities in different counties and was placed so as to cover both, both counties should be represented in the core coverage area.

Let's consider a hypothetical translator located in Duke County that serves the town of McNeil, which is in Buckley County. The translator service contour map shows that the translator serves a very small portion of Duke County. The core coverage area for the McNeil translator is Buckley County. If McNeil spreads more than marginally into Duke County, Duke County would also be included in the core coverage area.

The population of Buckley County is 64,000. McNeil has a population of 2,800. The rurality score for this application is 50.

There are two school districts in the core coverage area, Buckley County School District and the McNeil School District. Their NSLP eligibility percentages are:

Buckley County NSLP	45%
McNeil District NSLP	65%

The economic need score for the McNeil translator is  $(55\% * 100 - 25) / 2 = 15$ .

## Example for more than one Transmitter or Translator

The regulation states that when an application covers more than one transmitter or translator, the core coverage area of the application is the sum of the core coverage areas of all transmitters and translators included in the application. The following example illustrates how to calculate scores in such cases.

### Rurality Score (more than one translator or transmitter)

To calculate the rurality score, list all of the transmitters and translators in a table along with the counties that make up their coverage area. Fill in the population and urban population for each county. Counties that occur more than once should not be double counted, so for these there should be a note as shown below.

Transmitter/Translator	Counties	Population	Urban
<b>Transmitter A</b>	Smith	11,500	0
	Hampshire	15,000	0
	Johnson	30,000	21,000
	Monroe	12,370	0
<b>Translator 1</b>	Johnson	see note	see note
	Waverly	8,000	0
	Napa	7,488	0
<b>Translator 2</b>	Waverly	see note	see note
	Winchester	14,755	0
	Grant	9,045	0
	Totals	108,158	21,000

Note: These counties were already counted in a previous transmitter or translator. They should not be double counted.

The totals from this table are the numbers that should be used in the formula to calculate the rurality score:

Total population: 108,158      Urban population: 21,000

Rurality formula:  $(100 * (108,158 - 21,000) / 108,158) - 50 = 30.58$

The rurality score for this example is 30.58

**Economic Need Score (more than one translators or transmitter)**

To calculate the economic need score, list all of the transmitters and translators in a table along with the counties and all of the school districts that make up their coverage area. In this example, the counties and school districts are exactly the same. There may be examples where counties do not equal the school districts, and in those cases all the school districts in a county that has been counted in the rurality calculation should be listed. School districts that occur more than once should not be double counted, so for these there should be a note indicating that they have already been counted.

<b>Transmitter/Translator</b>	<b>School Districts</b>	<b>NSLP</b>
<b>Transmitter A</b>	Smith	45%
	Hampshire	49%
	Johnson	60%
	Monroe	38%
<b>Translator 1</b>	Johnson	see note
	Waverly	47%
	Napa	55%
<b>Translator 2</b>	Waverly	see note
	Winchester	42%
	Grant	33%
	Average	46%

Note: These school districts were already counted in a previous transmitter or translator. They should not be double counted.

The percentage average of all school districts should be used in the formula to calculate the economic need score:

The economic need score for this example is:  $(46\% * 100 - 25) / 2 = 10.5$

3. Critical Need -- Critical need is a measure of the urgency and importance of the project to the rural area the applicant serves. This scoring category is intended to account for factors not covered by other categories and the points are awarded by the Agency based on information supplied by the applicant.

This scoring category will also recognize that some transition purchases are more essential than others and that as the transition progresses, what is essential changes.

For example, during the transition from analog to digital transmitters, which concluded on June 12, 2009, a first time transition of a primary transmitter was the most essential project that could be undertaken and would have been scored accordingly. Now that all transmitters have completed the transition to digital, the focus may shift to some of the other eligible purposes such as translators, studio and production equipment, and master control equipment. But what equipment specifically is most essential may vary from station to station.

7 CFR 1740 lists six examples of factors that will be considered in determining the critical need score. This list is not intended to limit the forms of critical need presented by applicants. Applicants should also note that the order in which the examples are given has no particular significance – an application demonstrating the existence of the first example of critical need would not necessarily score more points than an application demonstrating the existence of the sixth example.

**Examples of critical need presented in the regulation are:**

(1) Geographic or coverage characteristics of the public television station's digital television coverage area that makes the digital transition unusually expensive. This could occur when a station covers areas separated by areas of uninhabitable land (or water) that require multiple transmitters or translators for reasonable population coverage;

(2) A severe lack of specialized human resources (such as teachers) for which digital educational television will compensate. An example of this would be communities so small that they cannot sustain reasonably-staffed schools;

(3) Geographic isolation of communities which will be overcome with public television station services. This situation could occur in a remote mountainous area where public television might be the only terrestrial television service;

(4) Non-traditional community needs (such as adult vocational retraining) that may be met only with digital public television station broadcast capabilities. A community that has recently lost its industrial base and where perhaps a language barrier prevents a large segment from obtaining job training;

(5) Historical events that have placed the public television station in severe financial stress. A station that has recently replaced its tower due to a severe weather event would be an example of this critical need; and

(6) The degree to which the project purposes will specifically benefit the rural public. Some types of projects, such as transmitter power upgrades, will

specifically benefit rural residents, and might not at all benefit urban residents, in a core coverage area to a degree not captured by the area's rurality score.

### ***E. Federal Communications Commission Authorization***

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The applicant shall provide evidence that the Federal Communications Commission has authorized the initiation of digital broadcasting at each of the applicant's transmitter and translator sites. In the event that a Federal Communications Commission construction permit has not been issued for one or more sites, the Agency may include those sites in the grant, and make advance of funds for that site conditional upon the submission of a construction permit.

### ***F. Compliance with other Federal Statutes and Regulations***

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The applicant is required to submit evidence that it is in compliance with other Federal statutes and regulations as follows:

1. E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60.
2. Architectural barriers.
3. Flood hazard area precautions.
4. Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.
5. Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998 (41 U.S.C. 701).
6. E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension; (See 7 CFR 3017.510).
7. Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352). If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" (See 7 CFR Part 3018).
8. Federal Obligations Certification on Delinquent Debt.
9. Representation Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants (to comply with the FY 2012 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, P.L. No 112-55, Division A, Sections 738 and 739)



## ***G. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation***

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The applicant must provide details of the digital transition's impact on the environment and historic preservation, and comply with 7 CFR 1794, which contains the Agency's policies and procedures for implementing a variety of federal statutes, regulations, and executive orders generally pertaining to the protection of the quality of the human environment.

The application shall contain a separate section entitled "Environmental Impact of the Digital Transition." This shall include the Environmental Questionnaire & Certification (see the toolkit), on which the applicant describes the impact of its digital transition. Submission of the Environmental Questionnaire & Certification does not constitute compliance with 7 CFR 1794.

**For a digital transition project that only involves internal modifications or equipment additions to buildings or other structures,** the environmental information normally required includes a description of the internal modifications or equipment additions, the size of the site in hectares, and the general nature of the proposed use of the facilities once the project is completed, including any hazardous materials to be used, created or discharged, any substantial amount of air emissions, wastewater discharge, or solid waste that will be generated.

## Putting It All Together

The grant application should be **assembled** and **tabbed** in the order outlined below. Numbered attachments have been provided in the toolkit for your use. Please use only the applicable attachments listed below.

Item #	Description	Toolkit #
1	Completed <i>Application for Federal Assistance</i> , Std. Form 424	1
2	Summary Worksheet	2
3	Evidence of Eligibility	
4	Executive Summary	
5	Project Cost Spreadsheet	
6	Broadcast Coverage Maps	
7	Complete Narrative Description	
8	Applicant's estimated Rurality Scoring	
9	Applicant's estimated Economic Need Scoring	
10	Critical Need Information	
11	Federal Communications Commission Authorization	
12	E.O. 11246, Equal Employment Opportunity, as amended by E.O. 11375 and as supplemented by regulations contained in 41 CFR part 60	3
13	Certificate Regarding Architectural Barriers	4
14	Certificate Regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions	5
15	Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 Certification	6
16	Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements	7
17	E.O.s 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension; (See 7 CFR 3017.510)	8
18	Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352). If the applicant is engaged in lobbying activities, the applicant must submit a completed disclosure form, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" (See 7 CFR Part 3018)	9
19	Federal Obligations Certification on Delinquent Debt	10
20	Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation	11
21	Representation Regarding Felony or Tax Delinquency	12
22	Supplemental Information (If Any)	

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 0572-0134. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 23 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.

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