

**2025 SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION  
RURAL INNOVATION STRONGER ECONOMY (RISE) GRANT PROGRAM  
OMB # 0570-0075**

**A. Justification**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS or the Agency), a Rural Development (RD) agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), administers the Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) grant program. The purpose of the RISE program is to create and enhance jobs and support industry clusters in low-income rural areas. This is achieved through grants awarded to rural jobs accelerator partnerships consisting of non-profit entities, Tribal entities, institutions of higher education and public bodies with expertise in delivering economic and job training programs. RISE grant funds can be used to build or support a business incubator facility, provide worker training to assist in either the creation of new jobs, upskilling the present work force to a high-wage job, or developing a base of skilled workers that will enhance the opportunities to enter a high-wage job within existing industry segments in the region.

The RISE program is authorized under Section 6424 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Farm Bill), P.L. 115-334, amended Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (the “Act,” 7 U.S.C. 2009cc) and implemented by [7 CFR part 4284, subpart L](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284/subpart-L) (ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284/subpart-L).

This package is a three-year renewal package for the burden associated with the RISE program.

**2. Explain how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.**

Rural partnerships wishing to apply for RISE grant funding must submit applications with specified forms, proposals, certifications, and agreements to the Agency electronically through Grants.gov. The information provided will be used to determine applicant and project eligibility and to ensure that projects meet program goals and that funds will be used for authorized purposes. Additionally, Partnerships that receive RISE grant funding are required to provide financial and program reports to ensure that the project is progressing, and that funds continue to be used for authorized purposes.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS – NON-FORMS**

**Application & Eligibility:**

Rural in character determination request. Due to the “adjacent” and “contiguous” language in the statutory definition of rural and rural area, a project may be in a rural “pocket” even though located near a city or town with a population of 50,000 or greater. If an applicant believes they are in one of those pockets, a unit of local government may petition the Under Secretary of RD for a “rural in character” designation. The petition must document why the petitioner believes the

area is “rural in character” including, but not limited to, the area’s population density, demographics, and topography and how the local economy is tied to a rural economic base

Request for appeal. Agency decisions that are adverse to the individual participant are appealable, while matters of general applicability are not subject to appeal; however, such decisions are reviewable for appealability by the National Appeals Division (NAD). All appeals will be conducted by NAD and will be handled in accordance with [7 CFR part 11](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-A/part-11) (ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-A/part-11). The Agency and appeals staff will use information provided to determine appealability of issues as well as formulate responses.

Environmental analysis. Applicants are required to provide documentation as outlined in [7 CFR part 1970](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XVIII/subchapter-H/part-1970) (ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XVIII/subchapter-H/part-1970). This information is necessary for the Agency to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

Discrimination Complaints. A person or a specific class of persons may file a discrimination complaint in accordance with [7 CFR 4284.1108\(e\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284#p-4284.1108(e)) (ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284#p-4284.1108(e)).

Certification of no outstanding judgments. If the applicant has an outstanding judgment obtained by the U.S. in a Federal Court (other than in the United States Tax Court), is delinquent in the payment of Federal income taxes, or is delinquent on a Federal debt, the applicant is not eligible to receive a grant until the judgment is paid in full or otherwise satisfied or the delinquency is resolved. The applicant will provide a certification, and the Agency will check the Do Not Pay System to verify this information.

Application modification. Once submitted and prior to Agency award, an applicant may modify its application or scope of work. If the change is to the applicant partners or if the scope of work change is significant, the application will be treated as a new application.

Application withdrawal. During the period between the submission of an application and the execution of grant award documents for an application selected for funding, the applicant must notify the Agency, in writing, if the project is no longer viable or the applicant is no longer requesting financial assistance for the project.

Matching funds availability. The applicant is responsible for providing documentation that the required matching funds for the project have been received or remain committed at the date a financial assistance agreement is executed with the Agency. The Agency uses this to ensure that the project is financially feasible as well as its continued compliance with statutory requirements.

Concept Proposal. Applicants may submit a concept proposal not less than 60 days in advance of the application deadline to receive an Agency review of program eligibility components, strengths and weaknesses of the proposal as well as an encouragement or discouragement letter. A discouragement letter does not preclude an applicant from submitting a complete application package. The concept proposal consists of the following items:

- Partnership information. Information on the membership and structure of the rural jobs accelerator partnership and the amount and source of matching funds is necessary for the Agency to determine applicant eligibility and ensure that financial requirements are met.
- Geographic region. A description of the geographic region to be served including the total population, economic characteristics of the region such as unemployment rates and income levels, industry sectors, their status, size and economic contribution to the region and all communities including metropolitan statistical areas and nonmetro low-income communities within the region must be provided. The availability and planned enhancements of broadband service and other assets of the region should also be identified. The Agency will use this information to determine project eligibility, ensure compliance with statute and regulation and for scoring purposes.
- Industry cluster. The industry cluster(s) that will be prioritized by the Partnership with information on the firms and support industries in those clusters; descriptions of the status of the industry (as emerging, existing, or declining) any existing interconnection and networks within the industry cluster and a description of participation and scale of small and disadvantaged businesses within the industry cluster must be provided. Descriptions of opportunities or potential of industry growth in the region and competitive advantages of the region and industry cluster should be highlighted along with opportunities within the industry for the creation of or upgrading to high-wage jobs is also part of this discussion. The Agency will use this information to determine project eligibility and ensure compliance with statute and regulation. This information will also be used for scoring purposes in a complete application.
- Executive summary. An executive summary, project plan and scope of work must be provided with the applicant's strategy, activities, budget, goals, and objectives for the use of RISE funds. Information on the sustainability of the partnership and jobs accelerator at the conclusion of the RISE grant period must also be provided. This information is used by the Agency to determine project eligibility and for scoring purposes.

System for Award Management (SAM) registration. To do business with the Federal government, the lead applicant is required to register at [SAM](https://sam.gov/) (sam.gov/). Registration in SAM allows the applicant to complete the Online Representations and Certifications Application which replaces several paper forms.

Identify ethnicity, race, and sex characteristics of lead applicant's leadership. The applicant has the option to provide demographic information that includes identifying the ethnicity, race and sex of the lead applicant's leadership.

Certification that the applicant is a legal entity in good standing. The applicant must certify that it is a legal entity in good standing (as applicable) and operating in accordance with the laws of the State(s) or Tribe where the applicant has a place of business. The applicant typically provides a printout from the applicable secretary of state office to show proof of legal entity and standing.

Identify known relationship or association with Agency employee. The lead applicant is required to notify the Agency whether or not they have a known relationship or association with an Agency employee. The Agency uses this information to determine if there is a potential conflict of interest and whether that conflict requires additional action by the Agency.

Concept Proposal Updates. Applicants that submitted a concept proposal are not required to submit duplicate documents; however, they are required to update any information that has changed. The Agency will use the new information to ensure compliance with statute and regulation.

Readiness demonstration. Applicants are required to provide descriptions of:

- the readiness of all partners in the partnership to contribute to the project;
- evidence of a formal agreement among the partners to deliver the RISE program;
- the demonstrated readiness to administer the RISE grant funds;
- how the project will be marketed in the region and how the partnership will measure success;
- plus, the timeline to complete proposed tasks and the schedule of implementation of each task.

The Agency will use this information to ensure that, if awarded, grant funds will be used expeditiously and to set benchmarks and follow-ups during grant servicing to ensure project success.

Targeted initiatives documentation. Applicants are required to provide documentation on how the RISE project will deliver program initiatives and the project's impact to rural workers, small businesses, and jobs. The Agency will use the information to ensure that the project meets approved activities, statutes and regulations.

Jobs and benefits to rural small and disadvantaged businesses discussion. Applicants must identify the potential for their project to produce high-wage jobs and benefit rural small and disadvantaged businesses. The Agency will use the information to ensure that project meets approved activities, statutes and regulations.

Targeted region discussion. The applicant is required to provide demographic information, a discussion on local and regional support for the proposed project and elaborate on current and future broadband services in the targeted region. The Agency will use the information to ensure that project meets approved activities, statutes and regulations.

Financial information. Applicants must identify matching funds and any other sources of funds for the project, provide current financial statements and a narrative demonstrating financial feasibility and sustainability of the project. The information will be used by the Agency as part of the eligibility determination.

Project support documentation. Documents submitted with application to provide project support in accordance with [7 CFR 4284.1117\(c\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284#p-4284.1117(c)) (ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284#p-4284.1117(c)).

Build America Buy America Requirements. Grantees that are Non-Federal Entities, defined pursuant to [2 CFR 200.1](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR2a6a0087862fd2c/section-200.1) (ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR2a6a0087862fd2c/section-200.1) as any State, local government, Indian tribe, Institution of Higher Education, or nonprofit organization, shall be governed by the requirements of Section 70914 of the Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA). Any requests for waiver of these requirements must be submitted pursuant to USDA's guidance available online at [usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver](https://usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver).

### **Awarding and Administering Grant:**

Request for time extension. Grantees may request a one-time, no-cost extension of the grant term. Requests must be in writing and submitted no later than 90 days before the expiration date of the Federal Financial Assistance Agreement. The Agency will use the grantee's written documentation of challenges that prompted the request for extension to determine whether an extension is warranted.

Bonding and insurance. If awarded funding, the applicant must provide satisfactory evidence to the Agency that all officers of the applicant organization are authorized to receive and/or disburse Federal funds and are covered by such bonding and/or insurance requirements as are normally required by the applicant. This requirement provides documentation to the Agency to ensure proper safety measures are in place regarding the receipt of funds.

SAM registration maintenance. Each grantee (unless an exception, as outlined in [2 CFR 25.110](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-I/part-25/subpart-A/section-25.110) (ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-I/part-25/subpart-A/section-25.110) (a) through (d), is approved by the Agency) is required to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award. Renewals to the applicant's SAM registration are required annually. The Agency uses the SAM site to ensure continued eligibility to receive Federal financial assistance.

Build America Buy America Requirements. Grantees that are Non-Federal Entities, defined pursuant to [2 CFR 200.1](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR2a6a0087862fd2c/section-200.1) (ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR2a6a0087862fd2c/section-200.1) as any State, local government, Indian tribe, Institution of Higher Education, or nonprofit organization, shall be governed by the requirements of Section 70914 of the Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA). Any requests for waiver of these requirements must be submitted pursuant to USDA's guidance available online at [usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver](https://usda.gov/ocfo/federal-financial-assistance-policy/USDABuyAmericaWaiver)

### **Servicing and Reporting:**

Inspection. The applicant is required by [7 CFR 4284.1120\(a\)](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284/subpart-L#p-4284.1120(a)) (ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284/subpart-L#p-4284.1120(a)) to permit the Agency to schedule and conduct periodic inspections of the project records and operations.

Programmatic changes – project cost or scope. Grantees may make changes to an approved project's cost or scope of work with Agency approval. Prior Agency approval is required for all increases in project costs. Prior Agency approval is required for a decrease in project cost only if

the decrease would have a negative effect on the long-term viability of the project. The request for change of project scope will be used by the Agency to determine approval of the change request and whether the change will impact the remaining grant amount.

Programmatic changes – change in contractor or vendor. Grantees may make changes to an approved contractor or vendor with Agency approval. When seeking a change, the grantee must submit a written request to the Agency for approval. The proposed new contractor or vendor must have qualifications and experience acceptable to the Agency. The written request must contain sufficient information to demonstrate to the Agency’s satisfaction that such change maintains project integrity.

Transfer of applicant. Any change to the jobs accelerator partnership prior to the obligation of funds must be approved by the Agency and will only be considered if the partnership entities are eligible in accordance with [7 CFR 4284.1112](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284/subpart-L/section-4284.1112) (ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-XLII/part-4284/subpart-L/section-4284.1112).

Transfer of Financial Assistance Agreement. After the project is obligated and operational, the applicant grantee may request, in writing, a transfer of the financial assistance agreement to another entity. The information contained in the request must allow the Agency to determine if the proposed transferee is an eligible entity and can continue with the grant purpose using the available funds.

Disposition of acquired property. If, for any reason, a grantee disposes of any assets acquired with Federal grant funds, they must abide by the disposition of acquired asset requirements as outlined in [2 CFR part 200](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200) (ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200) and Departmental regulations. Required notifications and information are used to ensure proper disposal of acquired assets and reimbursement, if applicable, to the government.

Financial management. Grantees must provide for a financial system that will include: (i) accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of each grant; (ii) records that identify adequately the source and application of funds for grant-supporting activities, together with documentation to support the records. Those records must contain information pertaining to grant awards and authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, outlays, and income; and (iii) effective control over and accountability for all funds. The grantees must adequately safeguard all such assets and must ensure that funds are used solely for authorized purposes. Records are to be made available to the Agency upon request.

Records management. The grantee will retain financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other records pertinent to the grant for a period of at least 3 years after completion of the grant period. Retention of these records ensures the information is available for grant close out and in the event of questions or concerns regarding grant administration.

Audit requirements. If applicable, grantees must provide an annual audit in accordance with [2 CFR part 200 subpart F](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200#subpart-F) (ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200#subpart-F). This requirement keeps grantees in compliance with Federal auditing standards.

Semi-annual performance report. To be completed by the grantee on a semi-annual basis for the first two years and annually thereafter. This narrative is used by the Agency to confirm that progress is being made toward achieving the approved objectives and tasks of the project and monitor the performance of the applicant.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS - FORMS APPROVED UNDER OTHER OMB NUMBERS**

The responses and hours associated with each response on the following forms have not been included in the spreadsheet that details the burden numbers because the burden for these are contained in other packages.

### **Application & Eligibility:**

Compliance Review (RD 400-8, OMB No. 0570-0062; 0575-0018, 0189). The grantee must maintain records and provide information to the Agency to allow completion of this form.

Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424, OMB No. 4040-0004). This is the standard application required to be completed for all Federal grant programs. It is completed by the grantee at the time of application and provides information necessary for the Agency to complete applicant eligibility determinations.

Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A, OMB No. 4040-0006). This is the standard form used by applicants to break down the line-item budget costs in detail.

Budget Information – Construction Programs (SF-424C, OMB No. 4040-0008). This is the standard form used by applicants to break down the line-item budget costs in detail.

Assurances – Construction Programs (SF-424D, OMB No. 4040-0009). This is the standard form signed by applicants to provide assurances that they will meet certain requirements of OMB Circular A-102.

Equal Opportunity Agreement (RD 400-1, OMB No. 0575-0201). This form is completed once, at the time of application, by the applicant. It provides guidance to ensure compliance with Federal Equal Opportunity requirements for construction projects.

### **Awarding and Administering Grant:**

Rural Business - Cooperative Service Financial Assistance Agreement (RD 4280-2, OMB No. 0570-0067). RBCS and the grantee at grant closing execute the grant agreement. This document outlines the responsibilities of the grantee. This document is necessary to ensure grant funds are used only for the purposes and activities specifically approved.

Request for Obligation of Funds (RD 1940-1, OMB No. 0570-0062, 0067). To be completed once at the time of award. This form is submitted by the grantee and used by the Agency to obligate funds.

Letter of Intent to Meet Conditions (RD 1942-46, OMB No. 0570-0021, 0061, 0062; 0572-0137; 0575-0015). To be completed once at the time of award. This form is submitted by the grantee and used by the Agency to ensure that the grantee is aware of the conditions of the award and that the grantee intends to meet them within a reasonable time.

Assurance Agreement (RD Form 400-4, OMB No. 0575-0201). This form is executed by the grantee and outlines the activities they will undertake to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 7 CFR part 15, and RBCS regulations.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL, OMB No. 4040-0013). Completed once, by the grantee, at the time of application to obtain disclosure of lobbying activities on the part of the grantee.

### **Servicing and Reporting:**

Request for Advance or Reimbursement (SF-270, OMB No. 4040-0012). This is the standard form used by the grantee to request advances or reimbursement of cash outlays for projects with no construction component.

Outlay and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs (SF-271, OMB No. 4040-0011). This is the standard form used by the grantee to request advances or reimbursement of cash outlays for projects involving construction.

Federal Financial Report (SF-425, OMB No. 4040-0014). This is the standard form used by the grantee to confirm that funds are being spent in conformity with the budget and work plan.

### **3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection.**

The RISE program requires application submission via Grants.gov. The use of Grants.gov allows the Agency to receive the applications electronically. Applicants who receive funding will be encouraged, but not required, to submit, as applicable, performance reports, and the annual status reports electronically. As such, all reporting requirements noted above, both written/non-forms and forms approved under other OMB control numbers, can be submitted electronically at Grants.gov. The Agency will not require submission by electronic methods because some applicants may not have the technological expertise for electronic submission or may not have the equipment necessary for high technological information gathering.

### **4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purpose described in Item 2 above.**

The Agency is utilizing existing forms used in the current RD grant and guaranteed loan programs. If similar information is found to be available from another Federal agency, every



effort is made to utilize that information as is or in an appropriately modified form for this program. In addition, only one application and set of forms and certifications is being requested. There will be no similar or existing information that could be submitted; therefore, there will be no duplication.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 82-1), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

The information collection required for this initiative places little or nominal burden on small entities beyond that performed in normal business practice. The Agency is using industry-standardized data elements and documents, supplementing them with Government-wide forms that are familiar to many applicants. The Agency estimates less than 20% of RISE grant applicants are small businesses.

**6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

The information collected under this program is the minimum necessary to conform to the requirements of the program regulations established by law. Information is collected when needed and cannot be collected less frequently and still meet the requirements of the programs. Failure to collect proper information could result in improper determinations of eligibility or improper use of funds.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection of information to be conducted in a manner:**

- a. **Requiring respondents to report information more than quarterly.** There are no information requirements that require specific reporting on more than a quarterly basis.
- b. **Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it.** There are no information requirements that require specific reporting in less than 30 days.
- c. **Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document.** There are no information requirements that require more than an original and two copies.
- d. **Requiring respondents to retain records for more than 3 years.** Retention of financial records, supporting documents, statistical records pertinent to the grant is required for 3 years after final grant disbursement, except when an audit finds the grantee in violation of the grant terms and conditions.
- e. **In connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study.** There are no such requirements.

- f. Requiring use of statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by Office of Management and Budget (OMB). There are no such requirements.
- g. Requiring a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use. There are no such requirements.
- h. Requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permissible by law. There are no such requirements.

**8. If applicable, identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice soliciting comments on the information collection. Summarize public comments received and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, reporting, format (if any), and on data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

RBCS published a notice requesting comment on the extension of the previously approved information collection for the RISE program (see [89 FR 103775](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/12/19/2024-30281/notice-of-revision-of-a-currently-approved-information-collection) (federalregister.gov/documents/2024/12/19/2024-30281/notice-of-revision-of-a-currently-approved-information-collection), December 19, 2024). The 60-day comment period closed February 18, 2025 and there were no comments.

In addition, the Agency contacted the following individuals at organizations that have participated in the program in the past to obtain their feedback on the amount of time needed to prepare a proposal and performance reports.

Thurston County Economic Development Council

- 4220 6<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Lacey, WA 98503
- Director of Strategic Alliances, 360-464-6054
- This applicant applied for a RISE grant three time before the project was awarded due to limited funding and expressed that the application got easier every year with experience. However, the initial application experience was complicated and took a significant amount of time. The applicants experience post application was well received. The burden of report preparation throughout servicing was minimal and the experience with RD staff was excellent.

Mississippi State University

- Box 9740 –190 Bost North
- Special Projects Coordinator, 662-325-4281ct
- This applicant applied for a RISE grant multiple times and echoed the comments of Thurston County Economic Development Council. The first application was challenging

as the process was new to them, but with the support of USDA staff they accomplished their goal of a successful application. This applicant is just entering the servicing period and had no additional comments on servicing.

Appalachian Ohio Manufacturers' Coalition

- 2351 State Route 821, Building 23, Marietta, OH
- 740-672-5183
- Ms. O'Connor expressed that the electronic application for RISE was well received and easy to use. Suggested improvements to the system are the ability to add graphs and other items to strengthen the application that are not currently allowed through the online system. Overall, this applicant experience in the RISE application process was good. This applicant's experience throughout grant servicing was positive and they echoed the comments of Thurston County Economic Development Council above.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents, including no remuneration of contractors or grantees.

**10. Describe any assurances of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurances in statute, regulation, or Agency policy.**

No assurance of confidentiality is provided to respondents for the information required.

The Agency published a Privacy Act of 1974: System of Records in the Federal Register on September 6, 2024 ([89 FR 72820](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/09/06/2024-20068/privacy-act-of-1974-system-of-records) (federalregister.gov/documents/2024/09/06/2024-20068/privacy-act-of-1974-system-of-records))).

**11. Provide additional justification for any question of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

The information collected does not contain any questions of a sensitive nature such as sexual behavior, religious beliefs, or other matters commonly considered private.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

Table 12.1 – Total Cost of Burden, shown below summarizes the estimated average annual burden associated with the RISE program. The attached Burden Hours workbook provides an Information Collection Burden Hours worksheet that details the estimates.

**Table 12.1 – Total Cost of Burden**

Burden Item	Estimated Yearly Average Burden
Number of respondents:	60
Number of awards:	10
Annual responses:	853
Total hours:	1,839
Cost per hour:	\$91.30
Total annual cost:	\$167,900

The attached Burden Hours workbook provides an Estimated Professional Wage Rate worksheet that shows the detailed calculation for the weighted wage rate of \$91.30 cost per hour above. The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2023 Occupation Profiles ([Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics \(OEWS\) Tables : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm) (bls.gov/oes/tables.htm) was used to obtain the Mean Hourly Wage for each position identified. Table 12.2 provides the two (2) positions identified for this calculation along with each Occupation Codes and Mean Hourly Wage. The benefits for each position was calculated by using the total benefits percentage of 29.60% for private industry workers from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economic News Release, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation – September 2024 ([Employer Costs for Employee Compensation - 2024 Q02 Results](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.toc.htm) (bls.gov/news.release/ecec.toc.htm)).

**Table 12.2 – Mean Hourly Rates per Position**

Position	Occupation Code	Mean Hourly Wage
Public Relations Managers	11-2032	\$76.65
Fundraising Managers	11-2033	\$64.24

### **13. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the respondents.**

There are no capital and start-up costs or operations and maintenance costs associated with this collection.

It is anticipated that wet signatures will be required on the legal documents for the awards. The program is estimating approximately 10 awards under RISE. The United States Postal Service charges \$9.95 to ship a legal, flat rate envelope. Using this as a basis, the total estimated burden for returning the legal documents is \$9.95 per awardee or \$99.50.

### **14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.**

The estimated Annualized Cost to the Federal Government is \$86,000, which is summarized in Table 14.1 below. The attached Burden Hours workbook provides an Annualized Cost to the Federal Government worksheet that details the following:

- Three (3) Review Steps
- Staff Positions for each Review Step.
- Calculated Wages Rates for each Staff Position.
- Number of hours required for each Staff Position.
- Total Cost for each Staff Position, Review Step and to the Federal Government.

**Table 14.1 - Total Cost to the Federal Government**

Review Step	Cost of Each	Number of Entities	Total Cost
Step 1: Application & Eligibility	\$882	60	\$52,920
Step 2: Awarding & Administering Grant	\$2,345	10	\$23,450
Step 3: Service & Reporting	\$963	10	\$9,630
<b>Total Cost to Federal Government</b>	<b>\$4,190</b>		<b>\$86,000</b>

*Staff Positions, GS Salary, and Total Salary Rate Calculated.* Table 14.2 below provides the staff positions used for the Review Steps along with each Staff Positions General Schedule (GS) Grade, Step and Salary. The GS Salary was obtained by using Tables 2025-SL, 2025-EX, and 2025-ES ([Pay & Leave](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/) (opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/)) from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Policy, Pay & Leave, Salaries & Wages.

**Table 14.2 - Staff Positions and GS Salary**

Staff Position	GS Grade	GS Step	GS Salary
Program Analyst	13	5	\$122,465
Environmental Protection Specialist	13	5	\$122,465
Assistant Administrator			\$187,930
Administrator			\$207,500

The Agency calculated the Hourly Rate by dividing the GS Salary by 52 weeks a year and then dividing that result by 40 hours per week. The benefits for each position was calculated by using the civilian position full fringe benefit cost factor of 36.25% from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies (M-08-13) dated March 11, 2008 ([Memorandum of the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies](https://www.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/omb/memoranda/fy2008/m08-13.pdf) (obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/omb/memoranda/fy2008/m08-13.pdf)).

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in burden, including the need for any increase.**

This is a revision of a currently approved collection. The total number of respondents increased by 30 from 30 in previous collection to 60 for this collection. The total burden hours for this collection are 1,839, an increase of 922 from the previous information collection package estimate (which was 917 burden hours). The total burden cost increased by \$92,390 from \$75,510 in the previous collection to \$167,900 for this collection. The increase in burden for this collection is due to the following:

- The RISE program typically receives 60 applications and typically awards a maximum of 10. The package needed to be updated to accurately reflect this.
- Adjustments to burden items to better represent what occurs with the program.
- Updates to the professional wage rate to use the most current data.

The total cost to the Federal Government increased by \$36,170 from \$49,830 in the previous collection to \$86,000. This increase is due to

- the increase in respondents,
- to accurately reflect what the program receives and awards, and
- adjustments to the salary rate calculation used.

**16. For collection of information whose results are planned to be published for statistical use, outline plans for tabulation, statistical analysis, and publication.**

The information collected will not be published for statistical use.

**17. Approval not to display the expiration date for OMB approval.**

The forms included herein are used throughout RD's 70+ programs (many of which are similar and similarly named). Because these forms cross so many programs, RD's customers do not necessarily know which control number applies to a particular program. If RD is required to include an expiration date, it would have to write out the whole program name for each and include an explanation of the program to ensure the public understood how the expiration date applies to the program in which they are engaging. This would likely add to, rather than diminish confusion, and likely add to the burden to the public. In fact, RD has heard from numerous stakeholders that expiration dates cause confusion, particularly when a package is pending renewal but still valid and have asked if there is a way to exclude them from forms broadly. To ensure that the public can access these documents with as minimal burden as possible, we request OMB approval to not display the expiration date.

**18. Exceptions to certification statement.**

There are no exceptions to the certification.

**B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods.**

This collection does not employ statistical methods.