



**Office of Broadband  
Development and Office of  
Recovery**  
**USDA Distance Learning and  
Telehealth Grants**  
**April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

# Objectives



- Describe the USDA DLT program

- Define clear action items for next steps to prepare to apply for federal funding

- Clarify additional support available through the Recovery Office, the Office of broadband Development, and the USDA

## Today's hosts



**Stanley Adams**

Director,  
Kansas Office of  
Broadband Development



**Roger Meeks**

Field Representative,  
United States Department  
of Agriculture



**Kelsey Olsen**

Deputy Secretary,  
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## The USDA's Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program

- The US Department of Agriculture recently allotted **\$44.5 million in funding** for Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grants
- The goal of the program is to help rural communities use the unique capabilities of **telecommunications** to connect to each other and to the world, **overcoming the effects of remoteness** and low population density
- The program supports **eligible rural communities** with the costs associated with capital assets, instructional programming, and technical assistance
  - The range of grants will be between **\$50,000 - \$1,000,000**
  - A minimum **15% match** is required for grant-only awards

Source: [USDA](#)



## DLT Grants are available to rural areas with population of 20,000 or less

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Eligible applicants include most entities that provide **education or health care** through telecommunications, including:

- 1 Most State and local governmental entities
- 2 Federally-recognized tribes
- 3 Non-profits
- 4 For-profit businesses
- 5 Consortia of eligible entities

## USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants can be used for capital assets and long-term support

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### Eligible capital assets

- **Broadband facilities**
- Audio, video and interactive **video equipment**
- **Terminal and data terminal** equipment
- Computer **hardware**, network components and software
- Inside wiring and similar **infrastructure** that further DLT services



### Long-term support

- **Instructional programming** that is a capital asset
- **Technical assistance and instruction** for using eligible equipment

The DLT Grant Program is a competitive program, applications are scored out of 110 points in objective and subjective categories

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## Rurality<sup>1</sup>

40 Points



## Economic Need

30 Points



## Special Considerations

10 Points



## Subjective Criteria

30 Points

1. The Rurality score is based on the population size of each community where an end-user site is located and the proximity of urban areas to the site. For non-fixed end-user site projects and projects which contain non-fixed components, the Rurality score will be based on the population and the proximity of urban areas to the Hub site

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### **Hubs and End User**

- Content or Service Provider connecting to end-user sites who will receive content or services.

### **Hub-End User to Hub-End User**

- Sites that provide experts to share content or services connecting to remote sites who will receive the content and services and deliver back different content and services





## There are several changes to the [USDA DLT grant application](#) for 2021

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1. Application submitted through [grants.gov](#)
2. No inclusion of special consideration points for STEM
3. Requirement of executive summary related to COVID-19

There are several steps an applicant must take before applying to DLT

Applications are now open and will be accepted through June 4<sup>th</sup>

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Before completing your application:

1. Obtain a DUNS number and CAGE code

- These numbers will be used to identify applicants within government systems

2. Register with SAM and Grant.gov

- Applicants must be registered with the federal System for Award Management and Grant.gov to receive DLT funding

The process of applying to and receiving funding will be straightforward and supported by the USDA and the Office of Recovery (RO)

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### Predictable process

- Clear eligibility guidelines
- Straight-forward application portals
- Standard reporting templates



### Support from USDA, Office of Broadband Development, and RO

- Ongoing Q&A support
  - Email [roger.meeks@usda.gov](mailto:roger.meeks@usda.gov)<sup>1</sup>, [kdc\\_broadband@ks.gov](mailto:kdc_broadband@ks.gov), or [KansasCOVIDSupport@ks.gov](mailto:KansasCOVIDSupport@ks.gov) for detailed questions
- Future RO webinars throughout the grant process

1. Applicants must reach out 15 days or more before the deadline of 6/4/21 because USDA Field Representatives are not allowed to take any questions after that date. USDA application guide available at: [https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fy2021\\_dlt\\_app\\_guide.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fy2021_dlt_app_guide.pdf)



## Appendix

## The DLT Grant Program is a competitive program, applications are scored out of 110 points in objective and subjective categories

Category	Points	Description
Rurality	40 <sup>1</sup>	<b>Population</b> , as determined by 2010 census: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceptionally rural area – Population of 5,000 and under: 40 Points</li> <li>Rural – 5,001-10,000: 30 Points.</li> <li>Mid-rural – 10,001-20,000: 20 Points</li> <li>Urban area – Less than 20,000: 0 Points</li> </ul>
Economic Need	30	Determined by <b>average of census bureau's small area income and poverty estimates</b> (SAIPE) percentage for counties in which end-user site is located: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SAIPE <math>\geq</math> 30 percent - 30 points</li> <li>SAIPE <math>\geq</math> 20 percent &lt; 30 percent - 20 points</li> <li>SAIPE <math>\geq</math> 10 percent &lt; 20 percent - 10 points</li> <li>SAIPE &lt; 10% percent - 0 points</li> </ul>
Special Consideration	10	Additional points automatically added for applications with the primary purpose of <b>STEM education, Opioid or other Substance Use Disorder treatment, or Opportunity Zone</b>
Subjective Criteria	30	<b>Need for services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The economic, geographic, educational, or health care challenges facing the communities in the project (with documentation)</li> </ul> <b>Benefits derived from services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the proposed project will help resolve the problems identified</li> </ul> <b>Local Community Involvement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in the planning and development of projects by local residents and organizations.</li> </ul>

1. Minimum score of 20 needed to apply