



RUS-DLT GRANT WORKSHOP

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Learn Design Apply Inc.



AGENDA

1

Introduction

2

**RUS-DLT
Overview**

3

**Objective
Scoring:
Creating a
Competitive
Project**

4

**Subjective
Scoring:
Quantifying Your
Project's Needs**

5

Q & A

1

INTRODUCTION

LEARN DESIGN APPLY INC.



- **Grant management and consulting firm**
- Look at all levels of funding with **extra focus on federal funding**
- **Partnerships with technology providers** who specialize in telehealth, distance learning, and networking / connectivity
- **Services offered:**
 - Where to find funding, “follow the money”
 - Which programs are the best fit / prequalification
 - Funding strategy
 - Application process project management and comprehensive support
 - Assistance locating a grant writer
 - Post-award support



2

RUS-DLT OVERVIEW



THE BASICS

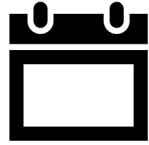


Rural Utilities Service Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant Program

- Annual **technology-focused** competitive grant
- Very consistent and reliable source of funding (one that you can rely on long-term!)
- Provides funding for **interactive, “real time”** distance learning and / or telemedicine projects that give rural residents access to content and / or services – **helping to bridge the digital divide!**
- Almost any type of organization is eligible to apply (exceptions: Federal organizations, sole proprietors, and organizations in coastal barrier zones).
- Both formal and informal consortiums are eligible to apply

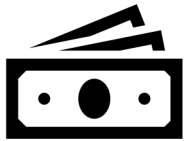


THE DETAILS



FY 2023 Program

- \$64 million allocated so far
- \$12 million for OUD / SUD projects
- Program may receive additional funding but unlikely to hold another round
- **DEADLINE:** January 30th
- **NEW:** Non-tribal organizations looking to bring services to tribal lands must obtain tribal resolutions from each applicable tribe



Budget & Expenditures

- 3-year grant period
- **MATCH REQUIRED:** Yes, 15% of the Federal Request (about 13% of total project costs)
- **AWARD RANGE:** Between \$50K and \$1M
- Funds must go toward technology and associated services primarily being used for distance learning and / or telemedicine



Project Design & Scoring

- Connecting rural entities together or to a hub (urban or rural) for resource / content sharing
- Scored on sites that receive the services, information, or content (“end-user sites”)
Exception: Projects with a non-fixed component

WHAT CAN I GET?



Eligible Expenditures

- ✓ **Capital Expenditures** – interactive distance learning or telemedicine equipment, video infrastructure, ancillary core network devices necessitated by the project, internal wiring, software, licensing, digitally connected peripheral devices, **cybersecurity (new)**
- ✓ **Up to 20%** of the budget can be spent on broadband related expenditures
- ✓ **Cloud Services**, if adequately justified
- ✓ **Remote Instruction** that is a capital expenditure
- ✓ **Technical Assistance** (up to 10% of the budget)



Ineligible Expenditures

- ✓ **Recurring Expenses** – transmission costs, existing operational costs, **salaries**, benefits, contractual, supplies, etc.
- ✓ **No Indirect Costs!**
- ✓ **No Evaluation Costs!**
- ✓ **Unrelated technology purposes**
All technology should directly enable / support live, interactive distance learning / telemedicine. For instance, a laptop computer can be eligible, but it must allow for high quality video collaboration.



PROJECT DESIGN

- 1. Hub(s) & Spoke(spokes):** Content / service provider connecting to remote sites who will receive the content / services
 - **EXAMPLE:** Medical center with specialists connecting to smaller hospitals or clinics without local specialists
 - **EXAMPLE:** Community college connecting to rural high schools to offer dual-enrollment courses

- 2. Hub/End-User to Hub/End-User:** Remote sites that will share content / services connecting to other remote sites who will receive the content / services and deliver back *different* content / services.
 - **EXAMPLE:** Rural high school with Mandarin teacher connects to another rural high school with a Spanish teacher. Students at both sites receive foreign language classes not available locally.
 - **EXAMPLE:** Rural hospital connects to rural mental health & substance abuse clinic. Hospital connects to MHSA clinic for services not available locally. Clinic connects to hospital for Continuing Medical Education and training.



PROJECT DESIGN (cont.)

3. **Non-Fixed:** Occasionally, you have a hub site that wants to provide services or content to any place in a given geography. In this instance, your Objective Scoring is based on the single hub site.
 - **EXAMPLE:** A home health organization would like to send a visiting nurse to anyone within their service area (ex: 2 county area). The home health organization is the **hub site**, and their physical location would be used to define the rurality and economic need scores.

4. **Hybrid:** Sometimes a project will have both a fixed and non-fixed component. In these cases, you score the non-fixed portion first, and then include it as a line item to be averaged in with your fixed site calculations.
 - **EXAMPLE:** A community health center wants to connect to a hospital for fixed site telemedicine, but also wants to connect on-demand to any site that their EMS team visits within their coverage area.



TYPES OF PROJECTS

- ✓ **School to School** – *sharing teachers & courses, enrichment*
- ✓ **School to Health Center** – *school-based health, prevention / wellness, mental health / substance abuse programming*
- ✓ **School to Higher Ed** – *dual enrollment, teacher training*
- ✓ **Higher Ed to Higher Ed** – *connecting satellite campuses to expand course offerings, bridging programs, workforce development*
- ✓ **Libraries & Other Community Centers** – *lifelong learning, adult education, workforce development, enrichment*
- ✓ **Medical Centers to Clinics** – *primary & specialty care delivery, continued medical education (CME)*
- ✓ **Clinic to Clinic or Hospital to Hospital** – *sharing doctors, dentists, nurses or allied health professionals; sharing CME, wellness & prevention programs*
- ✓ **Mental Health & Substance Abuse Clinics to anyone** – *delivering behavioral health and / or substance abuse treatment, education, therapy, etc.*
- ✓ **State/Local Orgs** – *connecting organizations together to share employee learning / training (DOH, Head Start, WIBs, etc.), corrections projects (educational opportunities, training, mental health supports, telemedicine), health departments connecting to rural communities for information sharing*



Limited only by your imagination!



APPLICATION COMPONENTS

- A. Standard Form 424
- B. Description of Project Sites
- C. Executive Summary of the Project
- D. Scoring Criteria Documentation (Rurality, Economic Need, Needs and Benefits, and Special Consideration)**
- E. Matching Requirements
- F. Scope of Work
- G. Financial Information and Sustainability
- H. Statement of Experience
- I. Telecommunications System Plan
- J. Compliance with other Federal Statutes
- K. Evidence of Legal Existence and Authority to Contract with the Federal Government
- L. Environmental Impact and Historic Preservation
- M. Consultation with USDA State Director
- N. Supplemental Information

Objective Score

Rurality = Up to 40 points

Economic Need = Up to 30 points

Special Consideration = 10 points

Subjective Score

Needs and Benefits Narrative = 30 points



3

OBJECTIVE SCORING

CREATING A COMPETITIVE
PROJECT

1234567890



OBJECTIVE SCORING CALCULATOR

- Once you have identified potential programmatic partners and project sites, you need to look at their demographics
- Are they a hub site, end-user site, or hub / end-user site?
- Identify their **Rurality** score
- Identify their **Economic Need** score
- Is there a **Special Consideration** category that applies to the site?
- Crunch the numbers! Is your overall score competitive?
- If not, consider adding or deleting sites to obtain a higher objective score



HOW DO I DETERMINE RURALITY?

- FY2023 program is using the **2010 Census**, available [here](#)
- Population data for the town / city / Census Designated Place where site is located
- Places that are not in the Census or locations that fall outside of town / city lines should be deemed Census Rural and get the maximum Rurality points

The screenshot shows the United States Census Bureau website interface. The search bar contains 'p1'. The results section displays '1 Result' for 'Decennial Census P1 | RACE'. The table shows the total population for the United States in 2010 as 308,745,538.

Label	United States
Total	308,745,538



RURality – Urban Adjacent Check

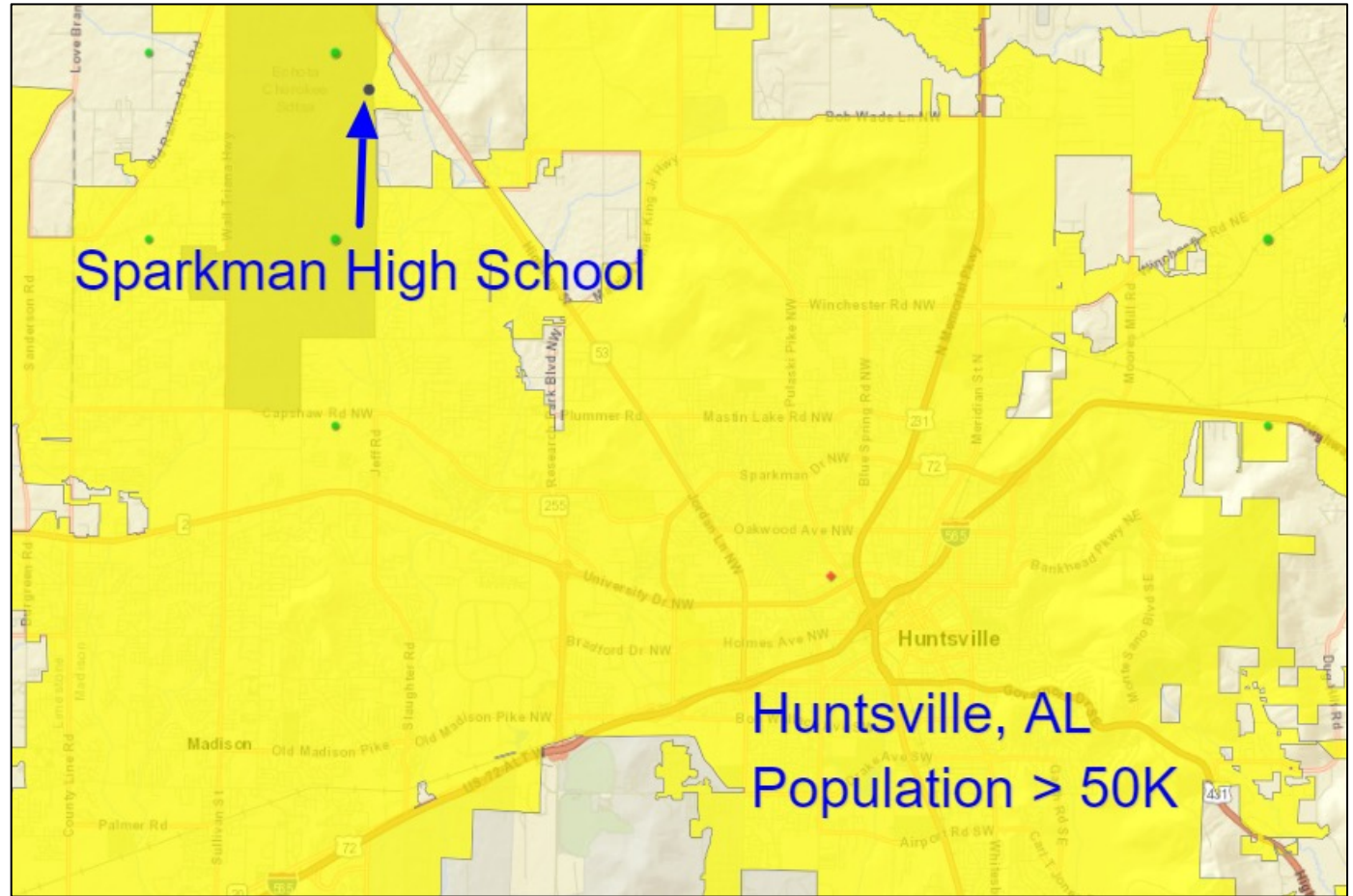
End-user site **cannot** be part of an urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town having a population in excess of 50,000 inhabitants.

USDA Rural Development has created this [map](#) to help you identify sites that are urban adjacent. Simply plug in the address at the text box at the top of the page.

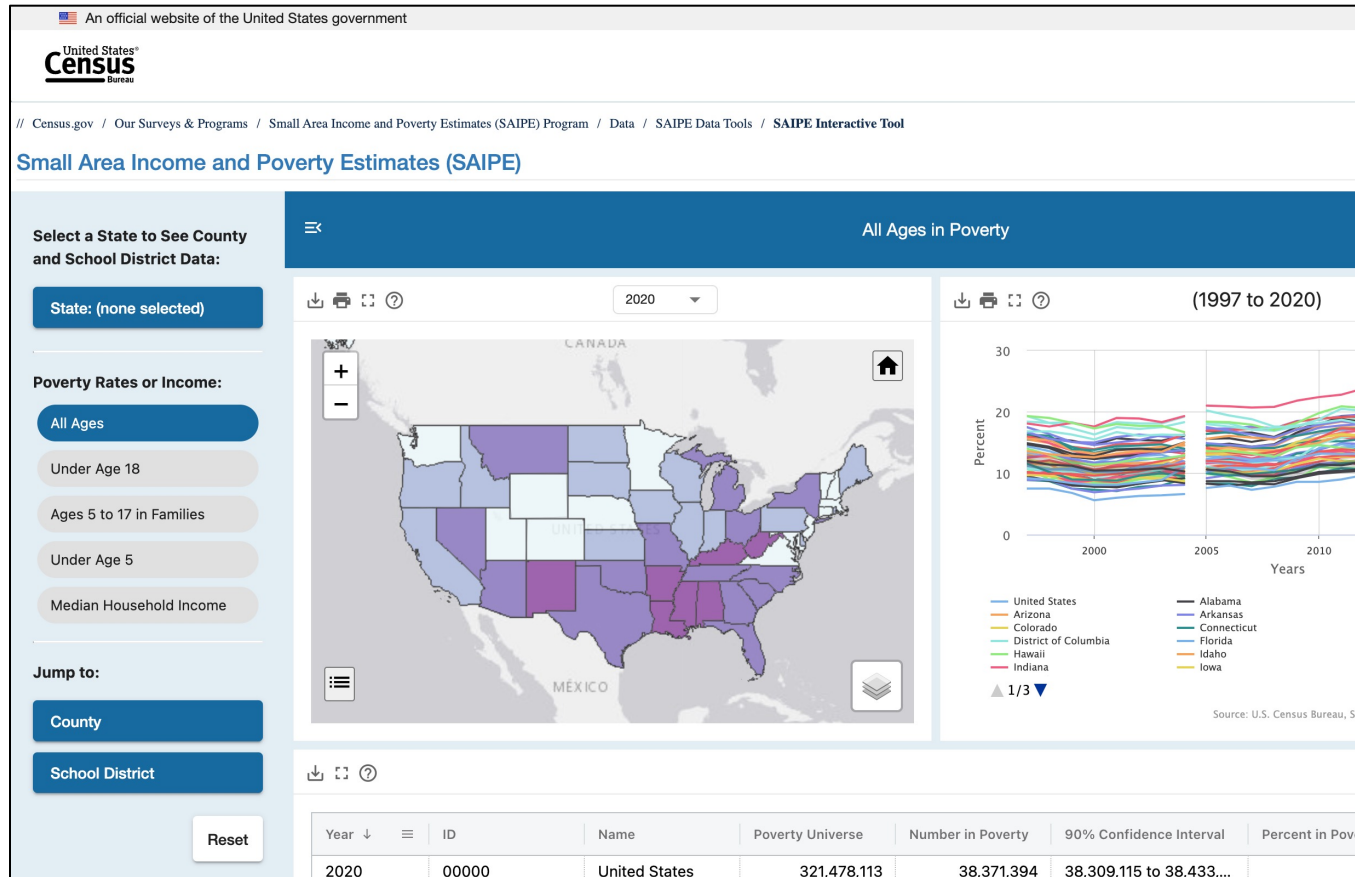
Example

Sparkman High School
2616 Jeff Rd NW, Harvest, AL 35749

Harvest, AL population = 5,893



HOW DO I DETERMINE ECONOMIC NEED?



- SAIPE = Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates
- Lookup tool on Census website, available [here](#)
- **A county-level** measure (*population is calculated at the level of city / town / Census Designated Place*)
- Scored based on the percentage of people in poverty (all ages) in the county where the site is located
- FY2023 program is using the **2020 SAIPE** dataset



OBJECTIVE SCORE SUMMARY

Rurality

Up to 40 points.

Averaged across all end-user sites
(sites receiving content / services)

- Exceptionally rural area: population 5,000 and under – **40 points**
- Rural area: population 5,001-10,000 – **30 points**
- Mid-rural area: population 10,0001-20,000 – **20 points**
- Urban area: population over 20,000 – **0 points**

End-user sites cannot be located near large metro areas

Economic Need

Up to 30 points.

Averaged across all end-user sites
(sites receiving content / services)

- SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 30 percent – **30 points**
- SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 20 percent but less than 30 percent – **20 points**
- SAIPE percentage greater than or equal to 10 percent but less than 20 percent – **10 points**
- SAIPE percentage less than 10 percent – **0 points**

Hub sites do NOT factor into the score...so they can be anywhere!

Special Considerations

Points given once per project

For FY 2023, Special Consideration will be given to projects that:

- Serve Tribal Lands, Farmworker Communities, or Distressed Energy Communities;
 - Support Native American Language(s); or
 - Support Mental Health Services
- 10 points** given once per project



4

SUBJECTIVE SCORING

QUANTIFYING YOUR
PROJECT'S NEEDS

NEED FOR SERVICES AND PROJECT BENEFITS

- The only scored narrative section in the RUS-DLT application is called the Need for Services and Project Benefits (“Needs & Benefits”) section. It makes up your entire Subjective Score – worth up to **30 points!**
- There are other narrative sections that are required as part of your application, but they are not scored. Check the boxes and get those done but focus your efforts on the Needs & Benefits section.
- Be a storyteller! This is where you can really demonstrate the need for your project and resonate with the reviewer.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In your application, you want to show that you involved members of the community in planning your project. Some options for doing so include:

- Holding a planning meeting (or meetings) within your community. As evidence your application, you can provide a snapshot of the posted invitation (e.g., newspaper clipping, social media post, etc.), details pertaining to the event, and a list of attendees.
- Developing a planning committee. Make sure you include a variety of stakeholders to show deep involvement and the impact your project will have. Keep a record of the dates of meetings, names and titles of attendees, and the topics discussed to include in your application.
- Sending out surveys to community members. Include the survey questions and response data in your application.

You also want to show how you identified the critical needs that your project is addressing. This could be from the community involvement mentioned above but also from looking at data points, records, incident reports, etc.

Needs assessment leads to...



NEEDS IDENTIFICATION & PROJECT DESIGN



When identifying your needs, try to think broadly.

Start with your primary need and then consider other ways distance learning or telemedicine connections can help address problems in your target area.

Example:

- **Primary need:** To provide primary care in a school-based health setting
- **Other possible needs / use cases:**
 - Prevention / wellness programming
 - Special education services (e.g., physical therapy, speech therapy, psychological testing, etc.)
 - Expanding access to teachers, families, community members
 - Access to specialty care (e.g., mental health professionals, allergist, nutritionist, etc.)
 - Continuing Medical Education, professional development



ALIGN NEEDS WITH BENEFITS & OUTCOMES

List out the needs you have identified. Go through them one by one and list out the expected benefits and outcomes your project will bring about. Benefits are more general while outcomes are more specific and detailed (and typically contain numbers).

You will typically have multiple benefits per need, and then multiple outcomes per benefit.

Needs	Benefits	Outcomes
1. lack of local primary care	1.1 Healthier Students	1.1.1 Increased attendance
		1.1.2. Greater Academic Achievement
	1.2 Prevention of pandemic outbreaks (measles, etc)	1.2.1 x% decline in epidemic outbreaks due to proactive immunization education and monitoring
2. limited access to special educators due to rurality and limited budget	2.1 virtual access to a wide variety of special educators	
		2.1.1 time between referral and assessment decrease
		2.1.2 delivery of services increases by X%
		2.1.3 documented student progress as measured by EOY assessments



NOW ELABORATE!



First with the needs!

- List out the individual needs included in your table and discuss each in detail
- Cite sources – how can you prove this need really IS a need?
- Make regional, state or national comparisons!
 - In what ways do you not compare favorably?
 - Reference specific metrics and statistics



Then proceed to the benefits and outcomes!

- Discuss benefits generally. How does your project allow you to achieve those benefits?
- Try to use specifics and numbers when discussing outcomes. What % increase, decrease, improvement, etc. are you anticipating? Use your best judgement!

Assume the reviewer is not an expert on your topic. Keep your narrative simple and to the point!



OTHER NEEDS & BENEFITS ELEMENTS

Community Background

- Discuss the area being served, paint an emotional picture of the challenges.
- Describe the demographics of your service area (include outward migration if relevant)

Alignment with State Plan

- Discuss how your project is in line with the direction your state is championing
- Cite similar initiatives

Important to discuss non-duplication throughout your application!

Project Support

- Letters of support from community members, partners, etc.
- Donations of time / money
- Board approval

Non-Duplication

- Discuss any DLT projects that your partners participated in in at least the 3 years (but going back further is better). Make it very clear how this project is ***different.***





Q: How long does my Needs section need to be?

A: There is no prescribed length for this section. However, this is a highly weighted section. Aim for 10 pages or more, but more importantly, just be thorough and address all elements

Q: What data points should I include?

A: You are identifying need... Bad = Good. Point out relevant areas where your project sites do not compare favorably. All projects are different so use data that impacts your proposed project

Q: How many support letters do I need?

A: Quality over Quantity! No templates! Have a representative sampling.



NEXT STEPS



RUS-DLT Office Hours this Friday 12/16 at 11 Mountain



Develop your partnerships & determine project sites



Check on your SAM registration and Grants.gov access



Determine who is writing your grant



5

Q & A

THANK YOU

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