



FUNDING ALERT!

Professional Assistance for Today's Unprecedented Funding Opportunities

RUS ReConnect Round 3

Program Name

RUS ReConnect Round 3

Categories & Amounts

\$1.15 billion

100% Grant: Up to \$350 million available; maximum award of \$35 million with a 25% match requirement

50% Grant / 50% Loan Combo: Up to \$250 million available; maximum award of \$25 million loan / \$25 million grant

100% Loan: Up to \$200 million available; maximum amount of \$50 million

Grants for Tribal & Socially Vulnerable Communities: Up to \$350 million available; maximum award of \$35 million; no match required for Tribal applicants and some SVCs

Eligible Entities

- Corporations, LLCs, local governments, Tribal entities, non-profits, cooperatives, etc.
- Scoring preference is given to local governments, non-profits, and cooperatives

Eligible Areas

- "Proposed Funded Service Areas" (PFSAs) are mapped by applicant; census blocks, census block group and other boundaries are not considered
- At least 90% of households in a PFSA must lack access to 100/20 Mbps fixed terrestrial service (mobile and LEO service not considered)
- Preference given to areas lacking 25/3 service
- Preference given to more rural areas
- If an applicant has applied for or is receiving other federal funding to deploy broadband in all or part of the PFSA, the applicant should explain how RUS funding will be complementary to but not duplicative of other funding

Key Dates

Application Window Opens: November 22, 2021

Application Window Closes: February 24, 2022 **(EXTENDED UNTIL MARCH 9, 2022)**

RUS 2021 ReConnect Webinars:

- November 9th
- November 10th
- November 16th
- November 18th

<https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/events>

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Scoring Criteria

1. **Rurality of PFSA - 25 Points**

- Population densities of 6 or less/sq mile, or if PFSA is 100 miles from a city or town of 50,000, receive 25 points

2. **Level of Existing Service - 25 Points**

- Areas lacking 25/3 service are awarded points based on the number of served households
- Applicants must provide evidence of lack of service
- FCC Form 477 data is not considered dispositive of the existing level of service

3. **Economic Need of the Community - 20 Points**

- Economic need based on the county poverty percentage of the PFSA determined by utilizing the Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program
- If 75% of an applications PFSA(s) cover communities with a SAIPE score of 20% or higher (as identified on the [ReConnect mapping tool](#)), 20 points will be awarded

4. **Affordability - 20 Points**

- Applications should demonstrate that prices will be affordable to their target markets
- Pricing and speed tier information should be provided, including a low-cost option
- Applicants should commit to participating in Lifeline and/or the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

5. **Labor Standards - 20 points**

- Description of strong labor standards, such as prevailing wage, safety training, professional certifications, etc.
- If build is on Tribal lands, consistency with Tribal labor laws required

6. **Tribal Lands - 15 Points**

- Applicants that are Tribal entities with PFSA(s) that are at least 50% on tribal lands receive 15 points
- Non-tribal entities with PFSA(s) serving at least 50% of tribal lands receive 10 points

7. **Local Governments, Non-profits and Cooperatives - 15 Points**

- Applications submitted by local governments, non-profits or cooperatives (including for projects involving public-private partnerships where the local government, non-profit, or cooperative is the applicant) will be awarded 15 points

8. **Socially Vulnerable Communities - 15 Points**

- Applications where at least 75% of the PFSA(s) propose to serve Socially Vulnerable Communities; i.e., a community or area identified in the Center for Disease Control's Social Vulnerability Index with a score of .75 or higher as identified on the [ReConnect mapping tool](#), receive 15 points

9. **Net Neutrality - 10 Points**

- Applicants that commit to net neutrality principles (i.e., will not block or impair/degrade lawful traffic or engage in paid prioritization) receive 10 points

10. **Wholesale Broadband Services - 10 Points**

- Applicants that commit to offering wholesale broadband services and reasonable and nondiscriminatory rates and terms receive 10 points

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Build Out & Other Requirements

- Facilities must be capable of delivering 100/100 Mbps service to every location in the PFSA simultaneously
- Build out must be completed within 5 years
- Closing, servicing, and reporting requirements are listed at [7 CFR 1740](#), Subparts F&G

Key Reference Links

ReConnect Main Page: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect>

ReConnect Mapping Tool: <https://ruraldevelopment.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1e82a64056fc46e4a28361c5e9447246>

ReConnect Webinars: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/events>

ReConnect Resources: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/forms-and-resources>

ReConnect FAQ: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/frequently-asked-questions>

Do You Need Help?

Contact NRTC for Funding Assistance:

NRTC's Funding Practice offers key benefits including:

- Opportunity Evaluation
- Effective Grant Writing
- Track Record of Success

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