Funding Amount: **$79 Million**

Program Name

RUS Community Connect Grant

Funding Amount

Up to $79 million for Fiscal Year 2023

- Awards up to $5 million per project
- Matching funds of at least 15% from non-federal sources are required

Key Dates

- **March 20** – Application Period Opens
- **June 20 – Application Period Closes at 11:59 AM ET**
- **September –** Anticipated Award Date

Eligible Applicants

- State and Local Governments
- Federally Recognized Tribes
- Cooperatives
- Nonprofits
- For-profit Corporations
- Limited Liability Companies

Eligible Areas

- Rural areas lacking broadband speed of at least 25/3 Mbps are eligible

Eligible Projects

- Upon completion, must deliver service of 100/20 Mbps
- Must offer free service at 100/20 Mbps to all participating Essential Community Facilities within the PFSA for at least 2 years
- Must provide a Community Center within the PFSA with a minimum of 2, and up to 10, computer access points and wireless access at 100/20 Mbps, free of charge, to all users for at least 2 years

Application Contents

- Application for Federal Assistance
  - Completed Standard Form 424
  - SAM Registration and Supporting Documentation
- Executive Summary of the Project
- Scoring Criteria Documentation

- System Design
  - Network Diagram
  - Environmental Questionnaire
- Service Area Demographics
- Scope of Work
  - Construction Build-out/Project Milestones
  - Project Budget
- Community-Oriented Connectivity Plan
- Financial Information and Sustainability
  - Historical Financial Statements
  - Pro Forma Financial Statement – Single Application
  - Pro Forma Financial Statement Assumptions
- Statement of Experience
- Evidence of Legal Authority
- Evidence of Funding Commitments from Other Sources
- Compliance with Other Federal Statutes and Regulations
  - Assurance Agreement
  - Certificate Regarding Flood Hazard Area Precautions
  - Applicant Certification Federal Collection Policies for Commercial Debt
  - Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 Certification
  - Certificate Regarding Architectural Barriers

Selection Criteria

- Community Needs Category – up to 50 points
- Stakeholder Involvement Category – up to 40 points
- Experience Category – up to 10 points
- In making a final selection between applications with comparable rankings and geographic distribution, the Administrator may take into consideration the following characteristics:
  - Persistent poverty counties served within the PFSA
  - Out-migration Communities served within the PFSA
  - Speed of service provided
  - Substantially Underserved Trust Areas served within the PFSA
  - Community members with disabilities served within the PFSA
  - Any other additional factors outlined in the FOA, program application guide, and program website

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Contact us for Funding Assistance. NRTC's Funding Practice offers key benefits including:
- Opportunity Evaluation
- Effective Grant Writing
- Track Record of Success

Eligible Costs

- Construction, acquisition, or leasing of facilities, spectrum, land, or buildings used to deploy broadband service
- Cost of providing broadband service free of charge to the critical community facilities for 2 years
- Less than 10% of the grant amount or up to $150,000 may be used for the improvement, expansion, construction or acquisition of a community center that provides online access to the public
- Matching funds can be used for operating costs

Ineligible Costs

- Operating expenses

Links & Emails

- [Community Connect Grants Main Page](#)
- [Community Connect Grants Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)](#)
- [Community Connect Program Map](#)
- [Community Connect Application Guide](#)
- [Community Connect Application Checklist](#)
- [Community Connect Fact Sheet](#)
- Please submit questions to community.connect@wdc.usda.gov

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