

return the cost of the investment in 2 years or less, 25 points will be awarded; 3–5 years, 20 points will be awarded; 6–8 years, 15 points will be awarded; or 9–11 years, 10 points will be awarded. The estimated return on investment is calculated by dividing the total project cost by the total dollars of energy savings of the energy efficiency improvements.

(3) Amount Requested. If the amount of the grant request is \$10,000–\$50,000, 15 points will be awarded; \$50,001–\$125,000, 10 points will be awarded; or \$125,001–\$200,000, 5 points will be awarded.

(4) Leveraged Funds. If the applicant has provided eligible leveraged funds of over 90 percent, 15 points will be awarded; 85 percent–90 percent, 10 points will be awarded; or 80 percent–84 percent, 5 points will be awarded.

Methods for Evaluating and Ranking Applications

State Rural Development Office personnel will review all applications. Ineligible and incomplete applications may be returned to the applicant and not evaluated further. Projects not financially or technically feasible will not be considered for funding. Qualified industry experts will review the technical requirements of the applications. The State Rural Development Office will score the application based on the Evaluation Criteria and submit it to the National Office to be reviewed and ranked. The National Office will rank applications based on its total score. The highest scoring applications will be selected until all the funds are depleted. Recommendations for funding will be forwarded to the Administrator of RBS, who will award the grants.

Planning and Performing Development

RBS will use 7 CFR 1780.54, 1780.57 (b)–(f) and (h)–(o), 1780.61, 1780.67, 1780.68, 1780.70, 1780.72, 1780.74, 1780.75, and 1780.76 for planning, designing, procurement methods and procedures, bidding, contract award and administration, and construction of renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement projects as applicable. However, grantees are not authorized to construct the facility/project/improvement in total, or in part, or utilize its own personnel and/or equipment under this NOFA.

Servicing Regulations

Grants will be serviced in accordance with 7 CFR, part 1951, subpart E.

Grantee Requirements

The grantee must sign a Grant Agreement (which is published at the end of the NOFA) and abide by all requirements contained in the Grant Agreement or any other Federal statutes or regulations governing this program. Failure to follow the requirements may result in termination of the grant and adoption of other remedies provided for in the Grant Agreement.

Paperwork Reduction Act

The collection of information requirements contained in this notice have received temporary emergency clearance by the Office of Management and Budget under Control Number 0570–0044. However, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, RBS will seek standard OMB approval of the reporting requirements contained in this Notice and hereby opens a 60-day comment period.

Abstract

RBS needs to receive the information contained in this collection of information to select the projects it believes will provide the most long-term economic benefit to rural areas. The selection process is competitive. RBS will ensure that the funds are used for the intended purpose.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 4.3 hours per response.

Respondents: Agricultural producers and rural small businesses.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 133.

Estimated Number of Responses Per Respondent: 11.

Estimated Number of Responses: 1,463.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 6,251 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Tracy Givlekian, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692–0039.

Comments

Comments are invited on (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of RBS, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the RBS estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including

through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Tracy Givlekian, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0742, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20250. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: April 1, 2003.

Thomas C. Dorr,

Under Secretary, Rural Development.

OMB No. 0570–0044

United States Department of Agriculture

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency Grant Agreement

THIS GRANT AGREEMENT (Agreement) dated _____, is a contract for receipt of grant funds under the Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency program (Title IX, Section 9006 of Public Law 107–171).

BETWEEN _____

(Grantee) and the United States Of America acting through the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), Department of Agriculture (Grantor).

WITNESS:

All references herein to “Project” refer to installation of a renewable energy system or energy efficiency improvement located at _____. The grant is \$_____ (Grant) which is _____ percent of the Eligible Project Costs.

Should actual project costs be lower than projected in the agreement, the final amount of grant will be adjusted to remain at the above percentage of the final Eligible Project Cost.

WHEREAS:

Grantee has determined to undertake the retrofitting, acquisition, construction, or purchase of a renewable energy/energy efficiency project described in the application dated _____ (Project) with a total estimated cost of \$_____.

Grantee is able to finance or obtain funding from other sources for \$_____.

Now, therefore, in consideration of said grant, Grantee agrees that Grantee:

Is in compliance with and will comply in the course of the Agreement with all applicable laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and other generally