

Comments must be submitted to William Kenney within 3 weeks from the RCDI application deadline.

Evaluation Criteria and Weights

Applications will be evaluated using the following criteria and weights:

1. Building Capacity—maximum 60 points

The applicant must demonstrate how they will improve the recipients' capacity, through a program of financial and technical assistance, as it relates to the RCDI purposes. Capacity-building technical assistance should provide new functions to the recipients or expand existing functions that will enable the recipients to undertake projects in the areas of housing, community facilities, or community and economic development that will benefit the community. The program of financial and technical assistance provided, how the program is delivered, and the measurability of the program's effectiveness will determine the merit of the application. All applications will be competitively ranked with the applications providing the most improvement in capacity development and measurable activities being ranked the highest. Capacity-building technical assistance may include, but is not limited to: training to conduct community development programs, *e.g.*, homeownership education, or the establishment of minority business entrepreneurs, cooperatives, or micro-enterprises; organizational development, *e.g.*, assistance to develop or improve board operations, management, and financial systems; instruction on how to develop and implement a strategic plan; instruction on how to access alternative funding sources to increase leveraging opportunities; staffing, *e.g.*, hiring a person at intermediary or recipient level to provide technical or financial assistance to recipients; and purchase technology equipment at the recipient level, *e.g.*, computers, printers, and software.

The narrative response must:

- a. Describe the type of financial and technical assistance to be provided to the recipients and the activities that will be conducted to deliver the financial and technical assistance;
- b. Explain how financial and technical assistance will develop or increase the recipient's capacity. Indicate whether a new function is being developed or if existing functions are being expanded or performed more effectively;
- c. Identify which RCDI purpose areas will be addressed with this assistance:

housing, community facilities, or community and economic development; and

d. Describe how the results of the financial and technical assistance will be measured. What benchmarks will be used to measure effectiveness?

Scoring—maximum of 60 points

1. Type of financial and technical assistance and implementation activities. 0–35 points

a. How well defined is the purpose of this proposal?

b. Are the implementation activities specifically defined?

c. Will the proposed implementation activities actually develop the recipient's capacity?

2. How financial and technical assistance will develop capacity. 0–10 points

a. Is a new function being developed and will it build capacity at the recipient level?

b. Is an existing function being expanded or performed more effectively and will it build capacity at the recipient level?

3. RCDI purpose. 0–5 points

a. Housing,

b. Community facilities, or

c. Community and economic development.

4. Measuring outcomes. 0–10 points

a. What benchmarks will be used to measure outcomes and effectiveness?

b. Are the proposed benchmarks an effective measurement for the type of financial and technical assistance provided?

2. Expertise—maximum 30 points

The applicant must demonstrate that it has conducted programs of financial and technical assistance and achieved measurable results in the areas of housing, community facilities, or community and economic development in rural areas. Provide the name, contact information, and amount of the financial and technical assistance the applicant organization has provided to the following for the last 5 years:

a. Nonprofit organizations in rural areas.

b. Low-income communities in rural areas, (also include the type of entity, *e.g.*, city government, town council, or village board).

c. Federally recognized tribes or any other culturally diverse organizations.

d. Organization synopsis. Scoring—maximum 30 points

1. The applicant has worked with groups in at least one of the three categories. 0–6 points

2. The types of financial and technical assistance provided are similar to the RCDI purposes. 0–15 points

3. The applicant demonstrates experience in working with the types of entities listed as recipients in the application. 0–9 points

3. Population—maximum 30 points

Population is based on the 2000 census data for the community in which the recipient is located. Community is defined for scoring purposes as a city, town, village, county, parish, borough, or census-designated place where the recipient's office is physically located. The applicant must submit a copy of the census data from the following website to verify the population figures used for each recipient. The data can be accessed on the Internet at www.census.gov; click on "American FactFinder" from the left menu; click on drop-down menu for "Show Me"; select "Population, Race and Hispanic or Latino under Geographic Comparison Tables (GCT)"; click on drop-down menu under "for"; select "State—and the type of State geographic subdivision"; select State from next drop-down menu; click on "Go"; print information for submission and highlight recipient locations. The average population of the recipient locations will be used and will be scored as follows:

Population Scoring 5,000 or less 30 points 5,001 to 10,000 20 points 10,001 to 20,000 10 points 20,001 to 50,000 5 points

4. Income—maximum 30 points

The average of the median household income for the communities where the recipients are physically located will determine the points awarded.

Applicants may compare the average recipient median household income to the State median household income or the national median household income, whichever yields the most points. The national median household income to be used is \$41,994. The applicant must submit a copy of the income data from the following website to verify the income for each recipient. The data being used is from the 2000 census. The data can be accessed from the Internet at www.census.gov; click on "American FactFinder" from left menu; click on drop-down menu for "Show Me"; select "Economic Characteristics: Employment, Income, Poverty and More"; click on drop-down menu under "for"; select "a city or town"; select State from next drop-down menu; select the city or town from the next drop-down menu; click on "Go"; print information for submission. Points will be awarded as follows:

Average Recipient Median Income Is: Scoring