

Less than 60 percent of the State or national median household income 30 points

Between 60 and 70 percent of the State or national median household income 20 points

Greater than 70 percent of the State or national median household income 10 points

5. Innovative Approach—maximum 20 points

The applicant must demonstrate that it has developed an innovative approach that can be used by other organizations as a model. To be considered innovative, the approach must propose an easily replicated new or useful service or method of providing service to recipients that builds their capacity to improve their communities in the areas of housing, community facilities, or community and economic development. Points will be awarded to applications that have the highest score on the following factors:

a. Ease of replication by nonprofit organizations, low-income rural communities, or Federally recognized tribes;

b. Uniqueness of proposal;

c. Financial return to rural communities; and

d. Need by nonprofit organization, low-income rural community, or Federally recognized tribe.

If warranted, up to 20 applicants will be eligible to receive points in this category. The application ranking and scoring are:

Ranking Scoring 10 highest-ranking applications for this criterion 20 points
Next 10 highest-ranking applications for this criterion 10 points

If there is a tied score, it will be resolved by using the format listed under "Rating and Ranking" under "Application Selection Process" elsewhere in this notice.

6. Soundness of Approach—maximum 50 points

The applicant can receive up to 50 points for soundness of approach. The overall proposal will be considered under this criterion. Applicants must list the page numbers in the application that address these factors.

a. The ability to provide the proposed financial and technical assistance based on prior accomplishments has been demonstrated. 0–5 points
b. The proposed financial and technical assistance program is clearly stated and the applicant has defined how this proposal will be implemented. The plan for implementation is viable. 0–20 points

c. Cost effectiveness will be evaluated based on the budget in the application.

The proposed grant amount and matching funds should be utilized to maximize capacity building at the recipient level. 0–15 points

d. The proposal fits the objectives for which applications were invited. 0–10 points

7. Geographic Distribution Points—20 points

The applicant must provide a map that specifically describes the areas covered by the recipients. After applications have been evaluated and awarded points under the first 6 criteria, the Agency may award 20 points per application to promote a broad geographic distribution of RCDI funds.

8. Purpose Distribution Points—20 points

The applicant must state the primary purpose of the application, *i.e.*, housing, community facilities, or community and economic development.

After applications have been evaluated and awarded points under the first 6 criteria, the Agency may award 20 points per application to promote diversity of RCDI purposes.

9. Proportional Distribution Points—20 points

The applicant must state the amount of the grant request. After applications have been evaluated and awarded points under the first 6 criteria, the Agency may award 20 points per application to promote dispersion of grant awards between the range of \$50,000 to \$500,000.

Deliverables

Grant funds and matching funds must be used in equal proportions. This does not mean funds have to be used equally by line item. The request for reimbursement and supporting documentation must show that RCDI fund usage does not exceed the cumulative amount of matching funds used. Grant funds will be disbursed pursuant to relevant provisions of 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016, and 3019, as applicable. Matching funds must be used to support the overall purpose of the RCDI program. RCDI funds will be disbursed on a reimbursable basis only. No advances will be made. Matching funds cannot be expended prior to execution of the RCDI Grant Agreement. No reimbursement will be made for any funds expended prior to execution of the RCDI Grant Agreement unless the grantee has requested and received written Agency approval of the costs prior to the actual expenditure. This exception is applicable for up to 90 days prior to grant closing and only applies

to grantees that have received written approval but have not executed the RCDI Grant Agreement. The Agency cannot retroactively approve reimbursement for expenditures prior to execution of the RCDI Grant Agreement.

Grant Amounts

In the event the applicant is awarded a grant that is less than the amount requested, the applicant will be required to modify its application to conform to the reduced amount before execution of the grant agreement. The Agency reserves the right to reduce or de-obligate the award if acceptable modifications are not submitted by the awardee within 15 working days from the date the request for modification is made. Any modifications must be within the scope of the original application.

Program Requirements

1. A Civil Rights Impact Analysis Certification must be completed by the Agency prior to grant approval.

2. A pre-award compliance review will be conducted by the Agency prior to closing the grant.

3. The intermediary and recipient must comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Executive Order 12250.

4. The grantee must comply with policies, guidance, and requirements as described in the following applicable OMB Circulars and Code of Federal Regulations:

- a. OMB Circular No. A–87 (Cost Principles Applicable to Grants, Contracts and Other Agreements with State and Local Governments);
- b. OMB Circular No. A–122 (Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations);
- c. OMB Circular No. A–133 (Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations);
- d. 7 CFR part 3015 (Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations);
- e. 7 CFR part 3016 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments); and
- f. 7 CFR part 3019 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations).

Program Restrictions

Meeting expenses. In accordance with 31 U.S.C. 1345, "Expenses of Meetings," appropriations may not be used for travel, transportation, and subsistence expenses for a meeting. RCDI grant funds cannot be used for these meeting-