

review the accuracy of our finding that the decision cannot be appealed. The appeal must be in writing and filed at the appropriate Regional Office, which can be found at <http://www.nad.usda.gov/offices.htm> or by calling (703) 305-1166.

D. Applicants selected for funding will complete a grant agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of the grant award.

E. Grantees will be reimbursed as follows:

1. SF-270, "Request for Advance or Reimbursement," will be completed by the grantee and submitted to either the State or National Office not more frequently than monthly.

2. Upon receipt of a properly completed SF-270, the funds will be requested through the field office terminal system. Ordinarily, payment will be made within 30 days after receipt of a proper request for reimbursement.

3. Grantees are encouraged to use women- and minority-owned banks (a bank which is owned at least 50 percent by women or minority group members) for the deposit and disbursement of funds.

F. Any change in the scope of the project, budget adjustments of more than 10 percent of the total budget, or any other significant change in the project must be reported to and approved by the approval official by written amendment to the grant agreement. Any change not approved may be cause for termination of the grant.

G. Grantees shall constantly monitor performance to ensure that time schedules are being met, projected work by time periods is being accomplished, and other performance objectives are being achieved. The Grantee will provide project reports as follows:

1. SF-269, "Financial Status Report (short form)," and a project performance activity report will be required of all grantees on a quarterly basis, due 30 days after the end of each quarter.

2. A final project performance report will be required with the last SF-269 due 90 days after the end of the last quarter in which the project is completed. The final report may serve as the last quarterly report.

3. All multi-State grantees are to submit an original of each report to the National Office. Grantees serving only one State are to submit an original of each report to the State Office. The project performance reports should detail, preferably in a narrative format, activities that have transpired for the specific time period.

H. The grantee will provide an audit report or financial statements as follows:

1. Grantees expending \$500,000 or more Federal funds per fiscal year will submit an audit conducted in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. The audit will be submitted within 9 months after the grantee's fiscal year. Additional audits may be required if the project period covers more than one fiscal year.

2. Grantees expending less than \$500,000 will provide annual financial statements covering the grant period, consisting of the organization's statement of income and expense and balance sheet signed by an appropriate official of the organization. Financial statements will be submitted within 90 days after the grantee's fiscal year.

VII. Agency Contacts

A. *Web site:* <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water>. The Rural Development Utilities Programs Web site maintains up-to-date resources and contact information for the RFP.

B. *Phone:* 202-690-3789.

C. *Fax:* 202-690-0649.

D. *E-mail:* anita.obrien@wdc.usda.gov.

E. *Main point of contact:* Anita O'Brien, Loan Specialist, Water and Environmental Programs, Water Programs Division, Rural Development Utilities Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Dated: January 11, 2008.

James M. Andrew,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. E8-1376 Filed 1-25-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Announcement of Grant Application Deadlines and Funding Levels

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of funds availability and solicitation of applications.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency delivering the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development Utilities Programs, hereinafter referred to as Rural Development, announces its Community Connect Grant Program application window for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008. In addition, Rural Development announces the minimum and maximum amounts for Community Connect grants applicable for the fiscal year. The Community Connect Grant Program regulations can be found at 7 CFR part 1739, subpart A.

DATES: You may submit completed applications for grants on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

- Paper copies must carry proof of shipping *no later* than March 28, 2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

- Electronic copies must be received by March 28, 2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

ADDRESSES: You may obtain application guides and materials for the Community Connect Grant Program via the Internet at the following Web site: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/commconnect.htm>. You may also request application guides and materials from Rural Development by contacting the appropriate individual listed in section VII of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice.

Submit completed paper applications for grants to the Rural Development Utilities Program, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 2870, STOP 1599, Washington, DC 20250-1599. Applications should be marked "Attention: Director, Broadband Division, Rural Development Utilities Program."

Submit electronic grant applications at <http://www.grants.gov> (Grants.gov), following the instructions you find on that Web site.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth Kuchno, Director, Broadband Division, Rural Development Utilities Program, U.S. Department of Agriculture, telephone: (202) 690-4673, fax: (202) 690-4389.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

Federal Agency: Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

Funding Opportunity Title: Community Connect Grant Program.

Announcement Type: Initial announcement.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.863.

Dates: You may submit completed applications for grants on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

- Paper copies must carry proof of shipping *no later* than March 28, 2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

- Electronic copies must be received by March 28, 2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications

are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

Items in Supplementary Information

I. *Funding Opportunity*: Brief introduction to the Community Connect Grant Program.

II. *Award Information*: Available funds and minimum and maximum amounts.

III. *Eligibility Information*: Who is eligible, what kinds of projects are eligible, what criteria determine basic eligibility.

IV. *Application and Submission Information*: Where to get application materials, what constitutes a completed application, how and where to submit applications, deadlines, items that are eligible.

V. *Application Review Information*: Considerations and preferences, scoring criteria, review standards, selection information.

VI. *Award Administration Information*: Award notice information, award recipient reporting requirements.

VII. *Agency Contacts*: Web, phone, fax, e-mail, contact name.

I. Funding Opportunity

The provision of broadband transmission service is vital to the economic development, education, health, and safety of rural Americans. The purpose of the Community Connect Grant Program is to provide financial assistance in the form of grants to eligible applicants that will provide currently unserved areas, on a "community-oriented connectivity" basis, with broadband transmission service that fosters economic growth and delivers enhanced educational, health care, and public safety services. Rural Development will give priority to rural areas that it believes have the greatest need for broadband transmission services, based on the criteria contained herein.

Grant authority will be used for the deployment of broadband transmission service to extremely rural, lower-income communities on a "community-oriented connectivity" basis. The "community-oriented connectivity" concept will stimulate practical, everyday uses and applications of broadband facilities by cultivating the deployment of new broadband transmission services that improve economic development and provide enhanced educational and health care opportunities in rural areas. Such an approach will also give rural communities the opportunity to benefit from the advanced technologies that are necessary to achieve these goals. Please see 7 CFR part 1739, subpart A for specifics.

This notice has been formatted to conform to a policy directive issued by the Office of Federal Financial Management (OFFM) of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB),

published in the **Federal Register** on June 23, 2003. This Notice does not change the Community Connect Grant Program regulation (7 CFR 1739, subpart A).

II. Award Information

A. Available Funds

1. *General*. The Administrator has determined that the following amounts are available for grants in FY 2008 under 7 CFR 1739.2(a).

2. Grants.

a. \$13,405,500 is available for grants. Under 7 CFR 1739.2, the Administrator has established a minimum grant amount of \$50,000 and a maximum grant amount of \$1,000,000 for FY 2008.

b. *Assistance instrument*: Rural Development will execute grant documents appropriate to the project prior to any advance of funds with successful applicants.

B. Community Connect grants cannot be renewed. Award documents specify the term of each award. Applications to extend existing projects are welcomed (grant applications must be submitted during the application window) and will be evaluated as new applications.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Who is eligible for grants? (See 7 CFR 1739.10.)

1. Only entities legally organized as one of the following are eligible for Community Connect Grant Program financial assistance:

- a. An incorporated organization,
- b. An Indian tribe or tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b(b) and (c),
- c. A state or local unit of government,
- d. A cooperative, private corporation or limited liability company organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis.

2. Individuals are not eligible for Community Connect Grant Program financial assistance directly.

3. Applicants must have the legal capacity and authority to own and operate the broadband facilities as proposed in its application, to enter into contracts and to otherwise comply with applicable federal statutes and regulations.

B. What are the basic eligibility requirements for a project?

1. Required matching contributions. Please see 7 CFR 1739.14 for the requirement. Grant applicants must demonstrate a matching contribution, in cash or in kind (new, non-depreciated items), of at least fifteen (15) percent of the total amount of financial assistance requested. Matching contributions must be used for eligible purposes of

Community Connect grant assistance (see 7 CFR 1739.12).

2. To be eligible for a grant, the Project must (see 7 CFR 1739.11):

a. Serve a Rural Area where Broadband Transmission Service does not currently exist, to be verified by Rural Development prior to the award of the grant;

b. Serve one Community recognized in the latest U.S. Census or the latest version of the Rand McNally Atlas;

c. Deploy Basic Broadband Transmission Service, free of all charges for at least 2 years, to all Critical Community Facilities located within the proposed Service Area;

d. Offer Basic Broadband Transmission Service to residential and business customers within the proposed Service Area; and

e. Provide a Community Center with at least ten (10) Computer Access Points within the proposed Service Area, and make Broadband Transmission Service available therein, free of all charges to users for at least 2 years.

C. See paragraph IV.B of this notice for a discussion of the items that make up a completed application. You may also refer to 7 CFR 1739.15 for completed grant application items.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Clarifications to Requirements for FY 2008

1. Rural Development clarifies that the definition of "Critical Community Facilities" includes the mandatory Community Center.

2. For all funding commitments, including all matching fund commitments and commitments made by the applicant, that are required to complete the Project in addition to the Rural Development grant, evidence must be submitted demonstrating that funding arrangements have been obtained. If the appropriate funding commitments are not included in the application, the application will be deemed ineligible for consideration. This evidence must:

- a. Clearly state the name of the entity that is making the commitment;
- b. The amount of the commitment; and
- c. The purpose of commitment.

3. Rural Development clarifies that in order to qualify as eligible costs for grant coverage or matching fund contributions, operating expenses incurred in providing Broadband Transmission Service to Critical Community Facilities for the first 2 years of operation and in providing training and instruction must be for the

following purposes subject to the specified maximum amounts:

- a. Salary for operations manager, not to exceed \$30,000 per year.
- b. Salary for technical support staff, not to exceed \$30,000 per year.
- c. Salary for community center staff, not to exceed \$25,000 per year.
- d. Bandwidth expenses, not to exceed \$25,000 per year.
- e. Training courses on the use of the Internet, not to exceed \$15,000 per year.

The operating costs to be funded by the grant or used as matching contributions cannot exceed in the aggregate \$250,000. No other operating expenses are eligible for grant funding or to be considered as matching funds.

4. Community means any incorporated or unincorporated town, village, or borough recognized in the latest decennial census as published by the Bureau of the Census or in the most recent edition of a Rand McNally Atlas that is located in a Rural Area.

5. Rural Development clarifies that the economic need of the applicant's service territory will be based on the median household income (MHI) for the Community serviced and the state in which the Community is located, as determined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census at <http://factfinder.census.gov>. If the community was qualified using the Rand McNally Atlas, the applicant must use the MHI, contained in the latest decennial census, of the county in which the Community resides as the Community MHI. The economic need will no longer be based on the Per Capita Personal Income of the community.

B. Where to get application information. The application guide, copies of necessary forms and samples, and the Community Connect Grant Program regulation are available from these sources:

1. The Internet: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/commconnect.htm>, or <http://www.grants.gov>.
2. The Rural Development Broadband Division, for paper copies of these materials: (202) 690-4673.

B. What constitutes a completed application?

1. Detailed information on each item required can be found in the Community Connect Grant Program regulation and the Community Connect Grant Program application guide. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read and apply both the regulation and the application guide. This Notice does not change the requirements for a completed application for any form of Community Connect Grant Program financial assistance specified in the

Community Connect Grant Program regulation. The Community Connect Grant Program regulation and the application guide provide specific guidance on each of the items listed and the Community Connect Grant Program application guide provides all necessary forms and sample worksheets.

2. Applications should be prepared in conformance with the provisions in 7 CFR part 1739, subpart A, and applicable USDA regulations including 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016, and 3019.

Applicants must use the Rural Development Application Guide for this program containing instructions and all necessary forms, as well as other important information, in preparing their application. Completed applications must include the following:

a. *An Application for Federal Assistance.* A completed Standard Form (SF) 424.

b. *An executive summary of the Project.* The applicant must provide Rural Development with a general project overview.

c. *Scoring criteria documentation.* Each grant applicant must address and provide documentation on how it meets each of the scoring criteria detailed 7 CFR 1739.17.

d. *System design.* The applicant must submit a system design, including, narrative specifics of the proposal, associated costs, maps, engineering design studies, technical specifications and system capabilities, etc.

e. *Scope of work.* The scope of work must include specific activities and services to be performed under the proposal, who will carry out the activities and services, specific time-frames for completion, and a budget for all capital and administrative expenditures reflecting the line item costs for all grant purposes, the matching contribution, and other sources of funds necessary to complete the project.

f. *Community-Oriented Connectivity Plan.* The applicant must provide a detailed Community-Oriented Connectivity Plan.

g. *Financial information and sustainability.* The applicant must provide financial statements and information and a narrative description demonstrating the sustainability of the Project.

h. *A statement of experience.* The applicant must provide a written narrative describing its demonstrated capability and experience, if any, in operating a broadband telecommunications system.

i. *Evidence of legal authority and existence.* The applicant must provide evidence of its legal existence and

authority to enter into a grant agreement with RUS and to perform the activities proposed under the grant application.

j. *Funding commitment from other sources.* If the Project requires additional funding from other sources in addition to the Rural Development grant, the applicant must provide evidence that funding agreements have been obtained to ensure completion of the Project.

k. *Compliance with other federal statutes.* The applicant must provide evidence of compliance with other federal statutes and regulations, including, but not limited to the following:

(i) 7 CFR part 15, subpart A—Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Agriculture—Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

(ii) 7 CFR part 3015—Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations.

(iii) 7 CFR part 3017—Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement).

(iv) 7 CFR part 3018—New Restrictions on Lobbying.

(v) 7 CFR part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

(vi) Certification regarding Architectural Barriers.

(vii) Certification regarding Flood Hazard Precautions.

(viii) An environmental report, in accordance with 7 CFR part 1794.

(ix) Certification that grant funds will not be used to duplicate lines, facilities, or systems providing Broadband Transmission Service.

(x) Federal Obligation Certification on Delinquent Debt.

3. DUNS Number. As required by the OMB, all applicants for grants must now supply a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying. The SF-424 contains a field for you to use when supplying your DUNS number. Obtaining a DUNS number costs nothing and requires a short telephone call to Dun and Bradstreet. Please see the Community Connect Web site or Grants.gov for more information on how to obtain a DUNS number or how to verify your organization's number.

C. How many copies of an application are required?

1. *Applications submitted on paper:* Submit the original application and two (2) copies to Rural Development.

2. *Electronically submitted applications:* The additional paper copies are not necessary if you submit the application electronically through Grants.gov.

D. How and Where to Submit an Application

Grant applications may be submitted on paper or electronically.

1. Submitting applications on paper.

a. Address paper applications for grants to the Rural Development, Utilities Program, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 2868, STOP 1599, Washington, DC 20250-1599. Applications should be marked "Attention: Director, Broadband Division, Rural Development Utilities Program."

b. Paper applications must show proof of mailing or shipping consisting of one of the following:

- (i) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark;
- (ii) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the USPS; or
- (iii) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

c. Due to screening procedures at the Department of Agriculture, packages arriving via the USPS are irradiated, which can damage the contents. Rural Development encourages applicants to consider the impact of this procedure in selecting their application delivery method.

2. Electronically submitted applications.

a. Applications will not be accepted via facsimile machine transmission or electronic mail.

b. Electronic applications for grants will be accepted if submitted through the Federal government's *Grants.gov* initiative at <http://www.grants.gov>.

c. How to use *Grants.gov*:

- (i) Navigate your Web browser to <http://www.grants.gov>.
- (ii) Follow the instructions on that Web site to find grant information.
- (iii) Download a copy of the application package.
- (iv) Complete the package off-line.
- (v) Upload and submit the application via the *Grants.gov* Web site.

d. *Grants.gov* contains full instructions on all required passwords, credentialing and software.

e. Rural Development encourages applicants who wish to apply through *Grants.gov* to submit their applications in advance of the deadline.

f. If a system problem occurs or you have technical difficulties with an electronic application, please use the customer support resources available at the *Grants.gov* Web site.

E. Deadlines

1. Paper applications must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight no later than March 28,

2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

2. Electronic grant applications must be received by March 28, 2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

F. Funding Restrictions

1. *Eligible grant purposes.* Grant funds may be used to finance:

a. The construction, acquisition, or leasing of facilities, including spectrum, to deploy Broadband Transmission Service to all participating Critical Community Facilities and all required facilities needed to offer such service to residential and business customers located within the proposed Service Area;

b. The improvement, expansion, construction, or acquisition of a Community Center that furnishes free access to broadband Internet service, provided that the Community Center is open and accessible to area residents before, during, and after normal working hours and on Saturday or Sunday. Grant funds provided for such costs shall not exceed the greater of five percent (5%) of the grant amount requested or \$100,000;

c. End-User Equipment needed to carry out the Project;

d. Operating expenses incurred in providing Broadband Transmission Service to Critical Community Facilities for the first 2 years of operation and in providing training and instruction; and

e. The purchase of land, buildings, or building construction needed to carry out the Project.

2. *Ineligible grant purposes.*

a. Grant funds may not be used to finance the duplication of any existing Broadband Transmission Service provided by another entity.

b. Facilities financed with grant funds cannot be utilized, in any way, to provide local exchange telecommunications service to any person or entity already receiving such service.

3. Please see 7 CFR 1739.3 for definitions, 7 CFR 1739.12 for eligible grant purposes, and 7 CFR 1739.13 for ineligible grant purposes.

V. Application Review Information

A. *Criteria*

1. Grant applications are scored competitively and subject to the criteria listed below.

2. Grant application scoring criteria (total possible points: 100) See 7 CFR 1739.17 for the items that will be reviewed during scoring and for scoring criteria.

a. The rurality of the Project (up to 40 points);

b. The economic need of the Project's Service Area (up to 30 points); and

c. The "community-oriented connectivity" benefits derived from the proposed service (up to 30 points).

B. *Review Standards*

1. All applications for grants must be delivered to Rural Development at the address and by the date specified in this notice (see also 7 CFR 1739.2) to be eligible for funding. Rural Development will review each application for conformance with the provisions of this part. Rural Development may contact the applicant for additional information or clarification.

2. Incomplete applications as of the deadline for submission will not be considered. If an application is determined to be incomplete, the applicant will be notified in writing and the application will be returned with no further action.

3. Applications conforming with this part will then be evaluated competitively by a panel of Rural Development employees selected by the Administrator of Rural Development Utilities Program, and will be awarded points as described in the scoring criteria in 7 CFR 1739.17. Applications will be ranked and grants awarded in rank order until all grant funds are expended.

4. Regardless of the score an application receives, if Rural Development determines that the Project is technically or financially infeasible, Rural Development will notify the applicant, in writing, and the application will be returned with no further action.

C. *Selection Process*

Grant applications are ranked by final score. Rural Development selects applications based on those rankings, subject to the availability of funds.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. *Award Notices*

Rural Development recognizes that each funded project is unique, and therefore may attach conditions to different projects' award documents. Rural Development generally notifies applicants whose projects are selected for awards by faxing an award letter. Rural Development follows the award letter with a grant agreement that contains all the terms and conditions for the grant. An applicant must execute and return the grant agreement, accompanied by any additional items required by the grant agreement.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The items listed in paragraph IV.B.2.k of this notice, and the Community Connect Grant Program regulation, application guide and accompanying materials implement the appropriate administrative and national policy requirements.

C. Reporting

1. *Performance reporting.* All recipients of Community Connect Grant Program financial assistance must provide annual performance activity reports to Rural Development until the project is complete and the funds are expended. A final performance report is also required; the final report may serve as the last annual report. The final report must include an evaluation of the success of the project. See 7 CFR 1739.19.

2. *Financial reporting.* All recipients of Community Connect Grant Program financial assistance must provide an annual audit, beginning with the first year a portion of the financial assistance is expended. Audits are governed by United States Department of Agriculture audit regulations. Please see 7 CFR 1739.20.

VII. Agency Contacts

A. *Web site:* <http://www.usda.gov/rus/commconnect.htm>. This Web site maintains up-to-date resources and contact information for the Community Connect Grant Program.

B. *Phone:* 202-690-4673.

C. *Fax:* 202-690-4389.

D. *Main point of contact:* Kenneth Kuchno, Director, Broadband Division, Rural Development Utilities Program, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Dated: January 11, 2008.

James M. Andrew,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. E8-1375 Filed 1-25-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Announcement of Grant Application Deadlines and Funding Levels

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of funding availability.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service, an agency delivering the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development Utilities Programs, hereinafter referred to as Rural Development and/or Agency, announces its Public Television Digital Transition

Grant Program application window for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008. In addition to announcing the application window, Rural Development announces the available funding and maximum amounts for the Public Television Station Digital Transition Grant Program competitive grants for the fiscal year.

The Public Television Digital Transition Grant Program is authorized through the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program. Funds from the Public Television Digital Transition Grant Program are awarded to public television stations which are a noncommercial educational television broadcast station that qualify for Community Service Grants by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting under section 396(k) of the Communications Act of 1934. These grants enable public television stations in rural areas to replace current analog television broadcasting equipment with digital television broadcasting equipment as part of the national transition to digital television service.

DATES: You may submit completed applications for grants on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

- Paper copies must carry proof of shipping *no later* than March 28, 2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.
- Electronic copies must be received by March 28, 2008 to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

ADDRESSES: You may obtain the application guide and materials for the Public Television Station Digital Transition Grant Program via the Internet at the following Web site: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/>. You may also request the application guide and materials from the Agency by contacting the appropriate individual listed in section VII of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice.

- Submit completed paper applications for grants to the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Utilities Programs, Telecommunications Program, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 2844, STOP 1550, Washington, DC 20250-1550. Applications should be marked "Attention: Gary B. Allan, Chief, Universal Services Branch, Advanced Services Division."

- Submit electronic grant applications to Grants.gov at the following Web address: <http://www.grants.gov/> (Grants.gov), and

follow the instructions you find on that Web site.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary B. Allan, Chief, Universal Services Branch, Advanced Services Division, United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Utilities Programs, Telecommunications Program, telephone: (202) 690-4493, fax: (202) 720-1051.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

Federal Agency: Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

Funding Opportunity Title: Public Television Station Digital Transition Grant Program.

Announcement Type: Initial announcement.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.861.

Dates: You may submit completed applications for grants on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

- Paper copies must carry proof of shipping no later than March 28, 2008, to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.
- Electronic copies must be received by March 28, 2008, to be eligible for FY 2008 grant funding. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2008 grant funding.

Items in Supplementary Information:
I. Funding Opportunity: Brief introduction to the Public Television Station Digital Transition Grant Program.

II. Award Information: Available funds and maximum amounts.

III. Eligibility Information: Who is eligible, what kinds of projects are eligible, what criteria determine basic eligibility.

IV. Application and Submission Information: Where to get application materials, what constitutes a completed application, how and where to submit applications, deadlines, items that are eligible.

V. Application Review Information: Considerations and preferences, scoring criteria, review standards, selection information.

VI. Award Administration Information: Award notice information, award recipient reporting requirements.

VII. Agency Contacts: Web, phone, fax, e-mail, contact name.

I. Funding Opportunity

As part of the nation's transition to digital television, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires all television broadcasters to