

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS, RESOURCES, AND WEBINARS NEWSLETTER

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES

AUGUST 23, 2023

USDA Empowering Rural America (ERA) Program

This Program provides \$9.7 billion in appropriated loan and grant funds to the USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) under the Inflation Reduction Act through FY 2031 for electric cooperatives who are or who have been recipients of RUS electric loans or who serve predominately rural areas for projects that will result in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and be consistent with long-term resiliency, reliability, and affordability of rural electric systems. Eligible projects include:

- The purchase of renewable energy and zero-emission systems.
- The purchase of carbon capture and storage systems.
- The deployment of such systems, or
- The implementation of energy efficiency improvements to electric generation or transmission systems.

Awards will be made as:

- **Loan Only:** The interest rate will be set at 2%, 0%, or at a rate tied to the Federal government's cost of money. Applicants may request 0% interest rates on loan only awards, the loan portion of a loan and grant combination, or a loan to refinance or modify existing debt.
- **Loan and Grant Combination:** The grant amount equals no more than 25% of the eligible award costs. Applicants may propose substituting cash for any portion of the loan component at the time of application.
- **Grant Only Awards:** A 100% grant award may finance no more than 25% of the total eligible project costs. Grants will be considered based on the estimated reduction in GHG emissions from the project. The grant portion of an Award must also be adequately secured, as determined by the RUS Administrator.

Awards cannot exceed 10% of the total program budget, or \$970 million, with grant portions covering up to 25% of eligible project costs. Awards may finance up to 75% of project costs through loans and 100% based on the risk profile of the applicant. Letters of interest are due **September 15th, 2023**.

For more information and to apply, click [here!](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

Texas Broadband Development Office (BDO) Digital Opportunity Plan Surveys
BDO is in the process of creating the Texas Digital Opportunity Plan, which will guide future funding and broadband program implementation and serve as a roadmap over the next five years for expanding the availability of reliable and affordable broadband, device access, digital skills, and cybersecurity awareness. BDO has a public survey and a survey for local governments and organizations to identify need for broadband as well as existing programs and service. **Please complete the public or local government survey [here](#).** The deadline for submissions is August 31st.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Economic Development Marketing & Attraction

August 28-29th, 11:00 AM-5:30 PM

Registration Fee: Members-\$690

Non-members-\$845

To register, click [here!](#)

Locating and Costing Congestion for School Buses and Public Transportation: Phase II

August 29th, 1:00-2:00 PM

Registration Fee: Free

To register, click [here!](#)

HUD Overview of Fair Housing Planning and Process

August 29th, 3:00-4:00 PM

Registration Fee: Free

To register, click [here!](#)



Untapped Markets for Foreign Direct Investment Opportunities

August 30th, 1:00-2:00 PM

Registration Fee: Free

To register, click [here!](#)