



# Rural Utilities Programs

## Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

### *Bringing the World to Rural America*

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program (DLT) is designed specifically to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America. Through loans, grants, and loan/grant combinations, advanced telecommunications technologies provide enhanced learning and health care opportunities for rural residents. The DLT program has funded over 1,050 projects in 48 states and four US territories totaling \$350.4 million.

### 100% Grant Program Features

DLT grant applications are accepted annually through a competitive process. The open season for applications is announced each year, usually in January, through a notice in the Federal Register. Applicants are required to provide a minimum of 15 percent in matching funds. Grant awards can range from a minimum of \$50,000 up to a maximum of \$500,000.

#### **Eligible Purposes:**

- Acquisition of eligible equipment:
  - Computer hardware and software
  - Audio and video equipment
  - Computer network components
  - Terminal equipment
  - Data terminal equipment
  - Inside wiring
  - Interactive video equipment
  - Other facilities that further DLT services
- Acquisition of instructional programming
- Acquisition of technical assistance and Instruction for using eligible equipment

#### **Competitive Scoring Criteria:**

- Rurality of the service area
- Economic need (estimated by the National School Lunch Program)
- Leveraging (matching funds)
- Project location in USDA Enterprise Zones
- Need for services and benefits
- Innovativeness
- Cost effectiveness of the system

### Combination Loan/Grant Program Features

DLT combination loan/grant applications are accepted year-round, are non-competitive and do not require the applicant to provide matching funds.

#### **Eligible Purposes:**

- All eligible grant purposes
- Medical or educational equipment
- Links between teachers and students or medical professionals in the same facility
- Site development and alteration of buildings
- Purchase of land
- Purchase or construction of buildings
- Acquisition of telecommunications transmission facilities provided no facilities exist

#### **Loan to Grant Ratios:**

For projects not related to Electronic Medical Records:

- 9:1 ratio; \$1 in grant for every \$9 in loan
- \$50,000 minimum; \$10,000,000 maximum

For Electronic Medical Records projects:

- 4:1 ratio; \$1 min grant for every \$4 in loan
- \$50,000 minimum, \$1,000,000 maximum

### 100% Loan Program Features

DLT loan applications are accepted year-round, are non-competitive and do not require the applicant to provide matching funds. Loan awards can range from a minimum of \$50,000 up to a maximum of \$10,000,000.

#### **Eligible Purposes:**

- All eligible combination loan/grant purposes
- Project operating costs for the first two years
- Distance learning broadcasting

## **For More Information**

For more information or to obtain an application package, visit the DLT website at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm>

Or write your local or state USDA Rural Development office (see the U.S. government listing of your phone directory under U.S. Department of Agriculture), or the National Office at:

USDA Rural Development

Utilities Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture

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