



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Rural Utilities Programs

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program

Bringing the World to Rural America

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program (DLT) provides enhanced learning and health care opportunities for residents of rural America through loans, grants, and loan/grant combinations that finance advanced telecommunications technologies. The DLT program has funded more than 920 projects in 48 States and four U.S. territories totaling \$306 million.

100 Percent 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, including:
 - Computer hardware and software
 - Audio and video equipment
 - Computer network components
 - Terminal and 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 USDA National School Lunch Program)
- Matching funds
- Project location in USDA Enterprise Zones
- Need for services and benefits
- Innovativeness
- Cost-effectiveness

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 building alterations
- Purchase of land
- Purchase or construction of buildings
- Acquisition of telecommunications transmission facilities if none exist

Loan-to-Grant Ratios

For projects not involving Electronic Medical Records:

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

For Electronic Medical Records projects:

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

100 Percent 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 million.

Eligible Purposes:

- All eligible combination loan/grant purposes
- Project operating costs for the first 2 years
- Distance learning broadcasting

For More Information

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

Or write to your local or State USDA Rural Development office (see the U.S. Government listing in your phone directory under U.S. Department of Agriculture) or the National Office at:

USDA Rural Development
Utilities Programs
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Room 2845
Mail STOP 1550
Washington, D.C. 20250-1550

Phone: (202) 720-0413
FAX: (202) 720-1051

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