

# Applying for federal infrastructure funding and grant writing assistance

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue consolidated the following information on applying for federal infrastructure funding. Below are some resources to benefit your community and residents.

## 1. Grant Writing Assistance

- **Review [spreadsheet](#)** (*Directory of Potential Grant Writing and Technical Assistance options for Rural Communities*) – contact information and office locations of organizations that can help with applying/writing grants for federal infrastructure funding and other available programs
- **Watch [recorded webinar](#)** (*Tips for Effective Grant Writing*) – this Wisconsin Department of Administration webinar details the grant preparation and application process and offers tips for submitting successful grant proposals
- **Note:** Remember, ARPA funds can be used to pay for consultants and grant writers

## 2. Available Loan/Grant Programs

Below are links to various U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development programs. You can also view the [Summary of Programs](#), which breaks down the major programs by:

- Objective
- Who can apply
- Uses
- Population criteria
- Loan/grant type
- Award terms and conditions

### A. Community Programs

- [Water and Environmental Programs](#) – rural communities obtain technical assistance and financing necessary to develop drinking water and waste disposal systems. This program is exclusively focused on rural water and waste infrastructure needs of rural communities with populations of 10,000 or less.
- [Community Facilities Programs](#) – expand or improve facilities that provide health care, education, public safety, and public services. Projects include fire and rescue stations, village and town halls, health care clinics, hospitals, adult and childcare centers, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation centers, public buildings, schools, libraries, and many other community-based initiatives.
- [Emergency Rural Health Care Grants](#) – help broaden access to COVID-19 testing and vaccines, rural health care services, and food assistance through food banks and food distribution facilities. Recovery grants provide immediate relief to address the economic conditions arising from the COVID-19 emergency. Impact grants advance ideas and solutions to solve regional rural health care problems to support the long-term sustainability of rural health.
- [Energy Programs](#) – offer funding to complete energy audits, provide renewable energy development assistance, make energy efficiency improvements, and install renewable energy systems
- [Community Connect Grants](#) – provide financial assistance to provide broadband service in rural, economically-challenged communities where service does not exist

- [Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants](#) – help rural communities use the unique capabilities of telecommunications to connect to each other and to the world, overcoming the effects of remoteness and low-population density. Funds may be used for acquisition of eligible capital assets, such as broadband facilities, audio, video and interactive video equipment, terminal and data terminal equipment, computer hardware, network components and software, and inside wiring and similar infrastructure.

## **B. Business Programs**

- [Rural Development Business Programs](#) – provide financial assistance, business development, and technical assistance to rural businesses
- [Value-Added Producer Grants](#) – help agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products
- [Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Programs](#) – provide financial support to qualified lenders whose loan applicants want to start or expand middle of the food supply chain activities such as aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storage, transportation, wholesale, or distribution of food
- [OneRD Guarantee Loan Initiatives](#) – offer loan guarantees to lenders for their loans to rural businesses, who in turn use the funds for business conversion, enlargement, repair, modernization or development; purchase and development of land, buildings and associated infrastructure for commercial or industrial properties; purchase and installation of machinery and equipment, supplies or inventory; debt refinancing when such refinancing improves cash flow and creates jobs; business and industrial acquisitions when the loan will maintain business operations and create or save jobs

## **C. Housing Programs**

- [Single Family Housing Programs](#) – give families and individuals the opportunity to buy, build, or repair affordable homes located in rural America. Eligibility for these loans, loan guarantees, and grants are based on income and varies according to the average median income for each area.
- [Single Family Housing Repair Loans and Grants](#) – also known as the Section 504 Home Repair Programs, provide loans to very-low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes, or provide grants to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards
- [Single Family Housing Direct Home Loans](#) –assist low- and very-low-income applicants obtain decent, safe and sanitary housing in eligible rural areas by providing payment assistance to increase and applicant's repayment ability. Payment assistance is a type of subsidy that reduces the mortgage payment for a short time.
- [Single Family Home Loan Guarantees](#) –help approved lenders make 100% financed, no-money-down mortgage loans to eligible low- and moderate-income applicants. Applicants can buy an existing home (including the cost of rehabilitating, improving, or relocating the dwelling) or they can build new. The home must be used as their primary residence, and must be modest, decent, safe, and sanitary.
- [Multifamily Housing Programs](#) – assist rural property owners through loans, loan guarantees, and grants that enable owners to develop and rehabilitate properties for low-income, elderly, and disabled individuals and families as well as domestic farm laborers

## D. Other Resources

- Contact sheets – for rural development [community programs](#) and [housing programs](#) in Wisconsin
- [Priority points](#) – also referred to as discretionary points, are additional points added to an established scoring criterion that USDA Rural Development uses to help determine which projects qualify for funding. Priority points raise a project's score, which in turn improves the chances of a project being scored high enough to warrant a funding award.
- [Resource guides](#) – USDA Rural Development guides on topics such as rural workforce, rural entrepreneurs, recreational economy, childcare, disaster resiliency and recovery, broadband resources, and more. Each guide is a resource for rural communities seeking assistance on a particular topic.
- [Eligibility site](#) –evaluates the likelihood that a potential applicant would be eligible for program assistance (households, rural businesses, communities)
- [Rural Partners Network](#) – available grant programs for rural communities

## Questions?

Contact [Wisconsin Rural Development](#) – you can also sign up to receive email updates through their Gov Delivery system whether it's national or for Wisconsin.