

Purpose

The Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Improvements Grants provide financial assistance to purchase and install renewable energy systems and energy efficient improvements in rural areas. Grant funds are also available to assist agricultural producers and rural small businesses by conducting and promoting energy audits and renewable energy development assistance.

Applicant Eligibility

- Must be an agricultural producer or rural small business.
- At least 51% US ownership or reside in the US after being legally admitted.
- Previously funded projects must be completed prior to consideration for additional funding.

Ineligible Applicants:

- Outstanding Judgment obtained by the US in a Federal Court
- Delinquent on the payment of Federal Income taxes
- Delinquent on a Federal debt
- Debarred from receiving Federal assistance.

Eligible Projects:

- Purchase a renewable energy system
- Make energy efficiency improvements
- Pre-commercial or commercially available and replicable technology.
- Have technical merit
- Located in a rural area (The small business and project must be located in a rural area; however, the business headquarters may be located in either a rural or non-rural area.)
- Must be the owner of the project and control the revenues and expenses of the project, including operation and maintenance.
- Sites must be controlled by the agricultural producer or small business for the financing term.
- Sources of revenue sufficient to provide for the operation, management, maintenance and debt service for the life of the project.
- Eligible entities to provide assistance to agricultural producers and rural small business through energy audits and renewable energy development assistance.

Grant funds will not exceed 25 percent of total eligible project costs. Other Federal grant funds and applicant in-kind contributions cannot be used to meet the matching requirement. Third-party, in-kind contributions are limited to 10% of the matching fund requirement.

Passive third-party equity contributions are acceptable for renewable energy system projects, provided the applicant meets the applicant eligibility requirements.

Maximum and Minimum Grant Amounts

Renewable Energy Request

\$2,500 - \$500,000

Energy Efficiency Request

\$1,500 - \$250,000

Maximum amount to one individual or entity per Federal Fiscal Year.

\$750,000

Applications

- Annual Notification of Funds Availability (NOFA) published in the Federal Register.
- Applications compete within the State and nationally for funds.
- Contact any USDA-Rural Development State Office for established application deadlines and application assistance.

- Applications are accepted throughout the year.
- **Application deadline for Fiscal Year 2014 -To Be Announced.**

Selection Factors

- Quantity of energy replaced, produced or saved.
- Environmental benefits
- Commercial availability
- Technical merit score
 1. Qualifications of project team
 2. Agreements and permits
 3. Energy or resource assessment
 4. Design and engineering
 5. Project development schedule
 6. Project economic assessment
 7. Equipment procurement
 8. Equipment installation
 9. Operation and Maintenance
 10. Dismantling and disposal of project components
- Readiness
- Small agricultural producer/very small business
- Simplified application/low cost project
- Previous grantees and borrowers
- Return on investment

Other Considerations

- Equal employment opportunity
- Equal opportunity and nondiscrimination
- Civil rights compliance
- Environmental analysis

Applicants should consider the potential environmental impacts of their respective applications at the earliest planning stages and develop projects that minimize the potential to adversely impact the environment. USDA-Rural Development is also required to assess the environmental impact of its decision to fund a project and will require that the application provide sufficient information for the completion of such assessments.

All applicants must be assigned a Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System number (DUNS). Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line,

1-866-705-5711, or by going online at http://www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/index.html

In addition, all grant applicants must be registered in the System for Awards Management (SAM) prior to submitting a grant application or plan and maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or grant application. Registration can be completed on the SAM website: <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM>

For More Information

Contact the USDA - Rural Development State Office in Lexington at 859-224-7435. TDD for hearing impaired (859-224-7422) or the USDA website at www.rurdev.usda.gov or the following Iowa website

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ia/rbcs_RE-EE_grants.html

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmbill/index.html>



Rural Development Area Offices / Area Specialists

Columbia Area Office - (270) 384-6431 ext 4
Madisonville Area Office - (270) 821-4430 ext 4
Shelbyville Area Office - (502) 633-3294 ext 4
Morehead Area Office - (606) 784-6447 ext 4
London Area Office - (606) 864-2172 ext 4