GRANTS OFFICE
empowering communities

Distance Learning Funding Made Simple

A DLT Grant Workshop for Education Institutions



Today's Presenters



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Grants Office
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Grants Office
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TODAY'S AGENDA

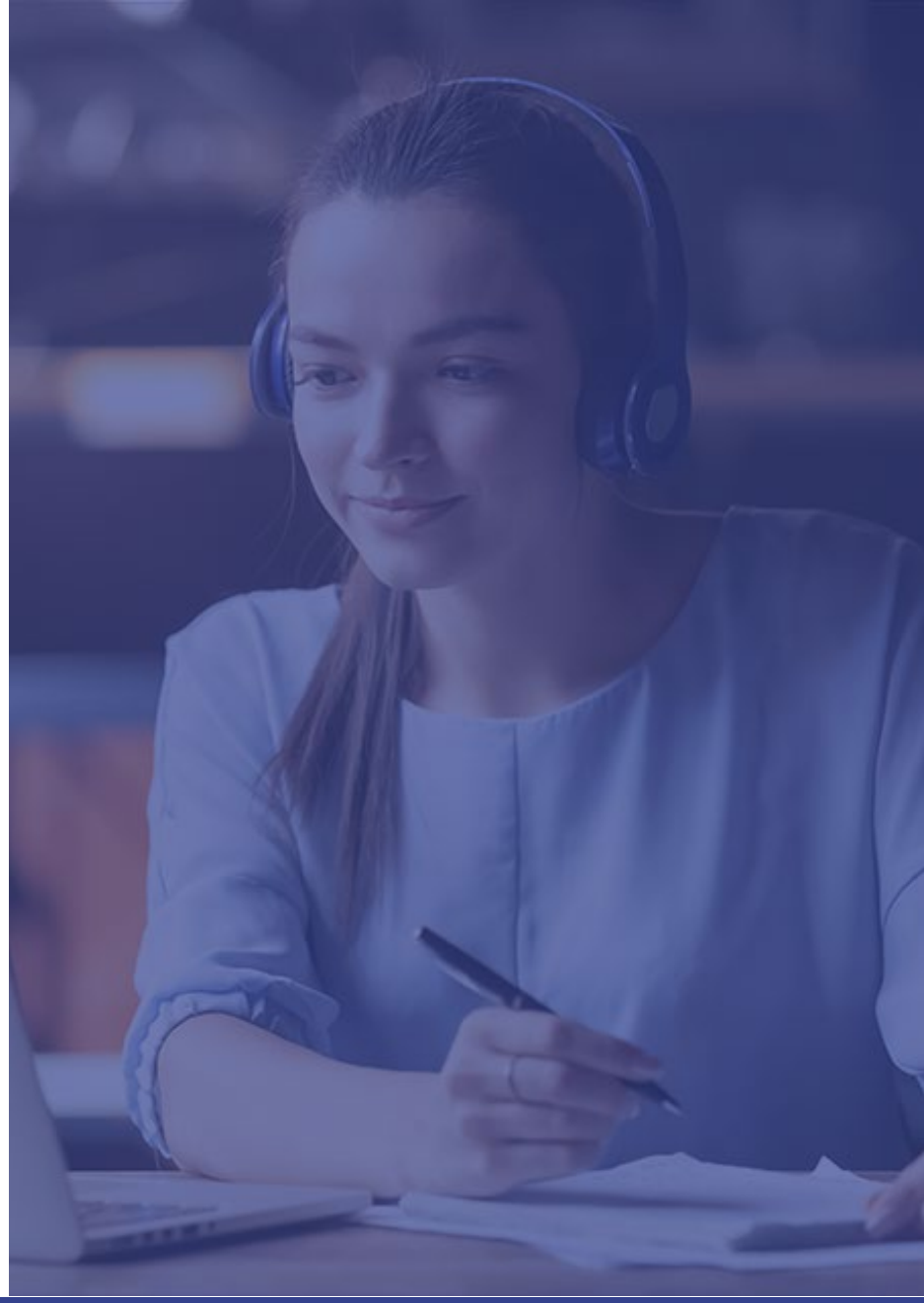
01 | Understanding the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program for Education

02 | Evaluating if DLT is right for you

03 | Preparing a competitive DLT proposal

04 | Engaging with Grants Office services

05 | Q&A



Understanding the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program (DLT)



Description

Expands educational opportunities and health services to rural Americans

Supports projects that expand this programming through the use of telecommunications, computer networks, and related advanced technologies

The DLT program is targeted to rural areas with populations 20,000 or fewer

Not for remote education into individual student homes

Funding Amount

$30 million in competitive grants; $10.76 million for Congressionally Directed Spending

Individual awards: $50,000 - $1 million with a 15% match

Deadline

Anticipated Spring 2026

Eligibility Notes

Legally organized as incorporated organization. State or local unit of government. Indian tribe/ tribal organizations. For profit or not for profit basis.

Examples of eligible education entities:

- Institutes of higher education
- K-12 schools
- Non-profit education providers

find this grant on GRANTS OFFICE COMMUNITIES

Project Format: Hub and End User Sites

Hub Site

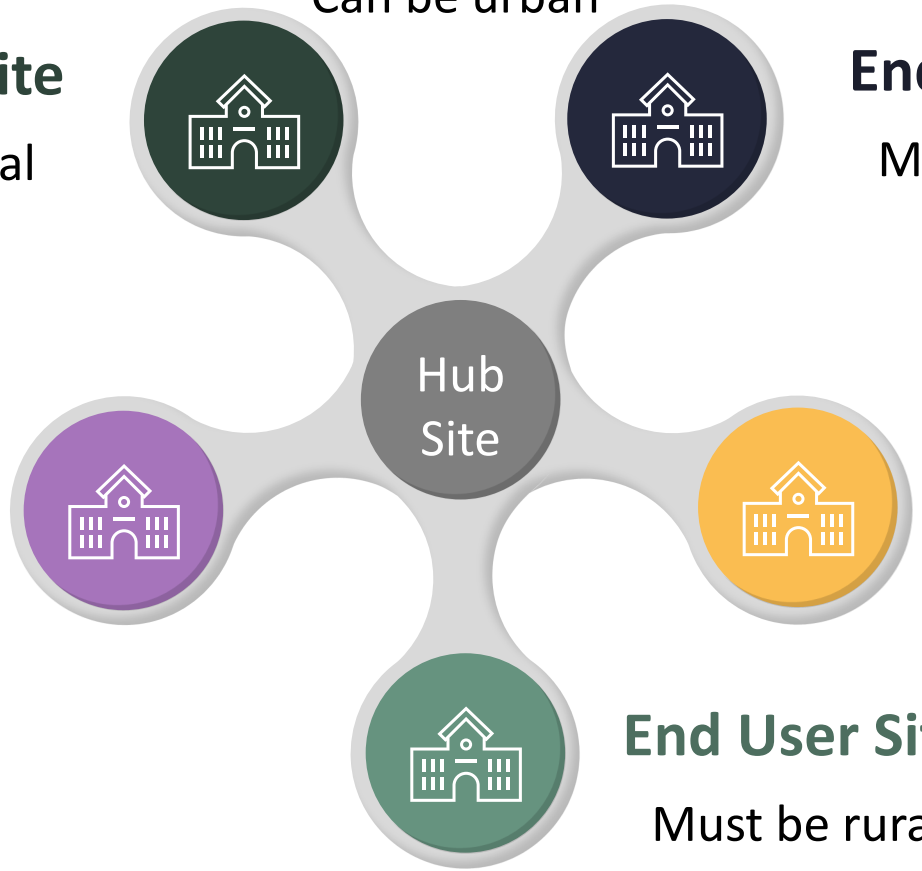
Can be urban

End User Site

Must be rural

End User Site

Must be rural



End User Site

Must be rural

End User Site

Must be rural

End User Site

Must be rural

Design by PresentationGO.com

Common Project Format for Distance Learning: Dual Enrollment

High School End User

Rural high school receiving education

Community College End User

Rural community college receiving education

University Hub Site

Urban college or university providing education



School District End User

Rural school district receiving education

Liberal Arts College End User

Rural liberal arts college receiving education

Design by PresentationGO.com

Eligible Technology Expenses

01 Telecommunications Equipment

Audio, video, and interactive video equipment

02 Broadband Facilities

Broadband facilities used for distance learning or telemedicine (limited to project)

03 Hardware and Software

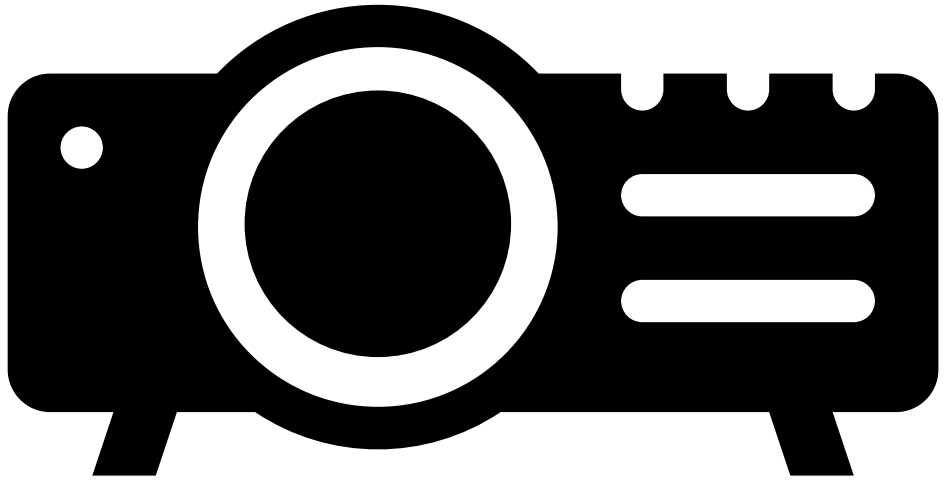
Computer hardware, network components, cybersecurity solutions, and software

04 Instructional Programming

Implemented as part of the grant project for distance learning, including simulation training

05 Technical Instruction

Limited technical assistance and instruction on how to use distance learning and telemedicine equipment



Components of DLT Proposals



Objective Scoring: Site List

Subjective Scoring: Project Narrative

Budget & Vendor Quotes

Evaluating if DLT is right for you

Site List
(HUB & END USER)

Proposed End User Sites will be scored Objectively

Rurality (up to 40 points)

End Site population scoring. Must not be part of an urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city/town having a population over 50,000.

Top scores for population under 5,000.

Pure hub sites can be located in an Urban Area

Economic Need (up to 30 points)

End Site economic need scoring. Use the U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE).

Top scores for county poverty percentage of at least 30%.





Site List

(HUB & END USER)

Objective Scoring Special Consideration (up to 10 points)

FY25 areas

- Most distressed tier of the Distressed Communities Index
- Communities with a high Social Vulnerability Index, Tribal Lands, or includes Tribes

2026 Special Consideration is subject to change

Decide if Your Objective Score will be Competitive

Objective Score Over 50

Competitive applications score at least 50 on the objective score (out of a possible 80)

Required: Applications must score at least a 20 on the Rurality component to be reviewed
Competitive applications typically score at least a 30 on this component

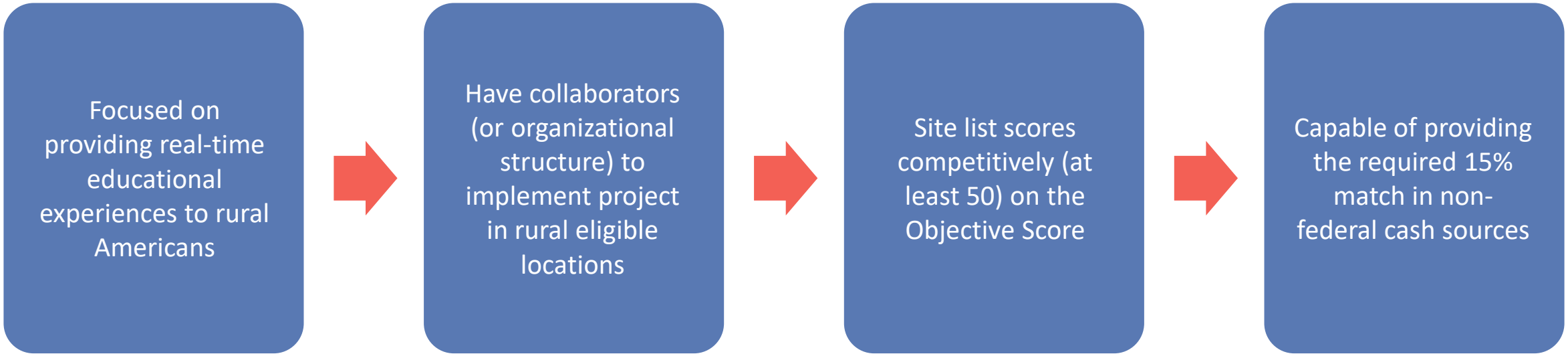
Objective Score Under 50

Consider modifications to your site list

- Can you easily remove non-competitive sites and still have a viable project? Or add more competitive sites?
- Consider combined hub/end-user sites and if they should just be pure hub sites

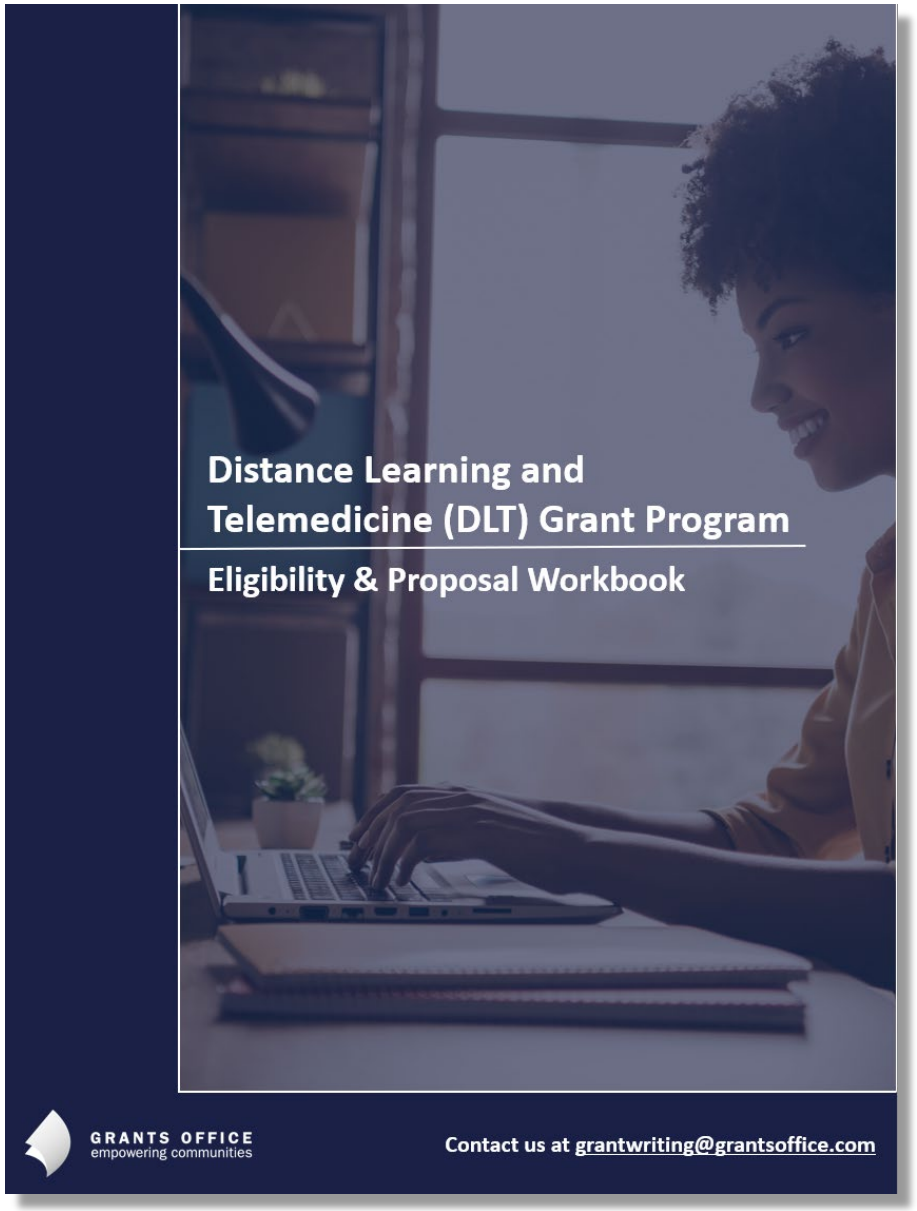
Still don't have an objective score over 50? Pivot to another grant for your project

Confirming DLT is a Good Fit for Your Education Project



Educational focus is flexible, but must be of interest to the students you will serve.

Ultimately, DLT is about expanding opportunities for rural Americans.



FREE Eligibility and Proposal Workbook

- Collect Important Account Details for Submission
- Build your Goals, Objectives, & Project Activities
- Outline Key Project Personnel & Duties
- Plan your Major Budget Items
- Start Brainstorming Your Narrative Content

Download our **FREE** workbook and get started preparing for DLT today!

Preparing a competitive DLT application

Major DLT Application Components

Objective Scoring

Site list of *physical addresses where equipment will be installed*

Reminder: Rurality Score must be at least 20 for review

Subjective Scoring

Narrative component describing planned services and need

Tip: Reach out to your USDA State Director early to discuss your project! It's a required element of the proposal.

Budget

Detailed line-item budget of all anticipated expenses and associated justifications

Required: vendor quotes for exact planned equipment

Subjective Scoring: Project Narrative

Major Components

- **Scope of Work**: specific activities, goals, timeframes, and processes
- **Financial Information and Sustainability**: resources and expertise to complete the project and ensure continuance
- **Statement of Experience**: demonstrate capability and experience for providing these services
- **Telecommunications System Plan**: network description and system plan diagram

Key Considerations

- Use charts to show key project components and the timeline
- Define cost-sharing arrangements amongst project partners
- Reviewers are looking for specifics on the services being provided
- Involve your vendors and consultants early, especially for the system plan diagram and budget components

Budget Considerations

Match

15% match is required

Usually required to be a cash match from non-federal sources

Vendor Quotes Required

Exact equipment that will be installed must be quoted and in the budget. **Changes are complicated after submission!**

System Plan Map/Diagram

Separate map for each site

Include geographic information & equipment details

Detailed Line Items

Include brand and model numbers

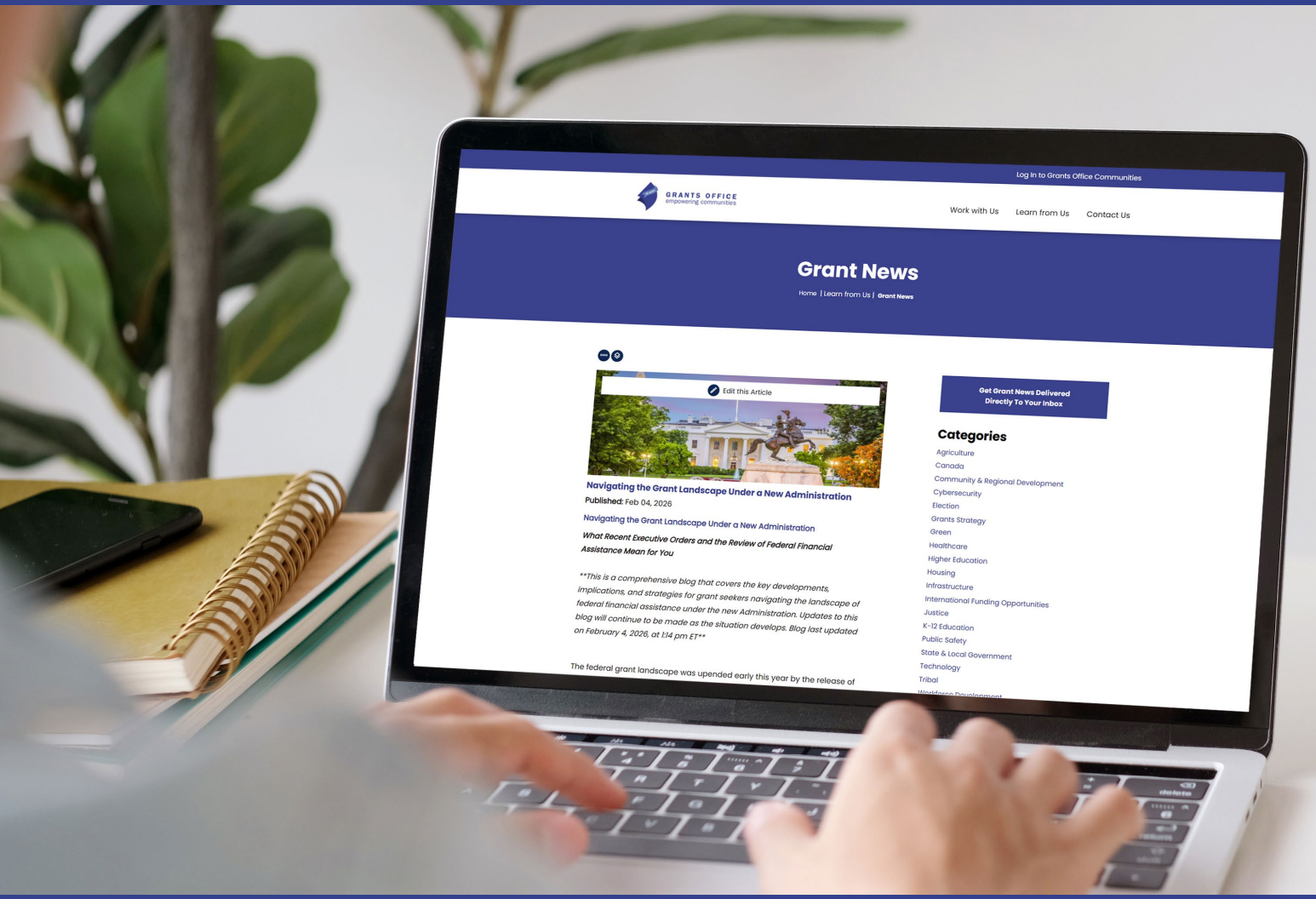
Each line item needs to be easily evaluated by the USDA

Clear Justification

Every item must clearly show >50% application to distance learning usage

Grants Office is Here to Help

Questions about FY26? We have the answers.





Scan for our
***FREE* Guidance**
for Grantseekers
resources!

Grants Office is here to help!

Proposal Development & Writing

Grants are assigned a cost tier based on the complexity of the application's requirements and the time until the grant's deadline.

For example, the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program tends to fall between Tier 5 and Tier 7.

Writing the proposal yourself?

Grants Office provides review services at 25% of the grant tier cost.

Example service costs
Pricing valid through December 2025

Tier	Cost for Proposal Development
1	$3900
2	$4900
3	$5900
4	$6900
5	$7900
6+	$8900+



Engage with Grants Office to Write Your Proposal

Step 1

Contact Us

Email your completed Eligibility and Proposal Workbook to Liz, our DLT expert: grantwriting@grantsoffice.com

Step 2

Initial Meeting

Liz will set up a time to discuss your project goals and development needs.

Step 3

Grant Writing will Begin

Your Grants Office Grant Writer will utilize the materials you provide to write your DLT Proposal.

Step 4

Proposal Review

Meet with Liz to finalize your proposal and ensure all requirements have been met.

Step 5

Submit Application

Once completed, you will submit your grant application and let us know when you win!

Other Grants Office Services

SCAN HERE

Research & Consultation

Grants Office will identify what grants best fit your upcoming projects and develop next steps.

Project Building

Grants Office will advise on project development and material gathering with a particular grant in mind.

Grant Proposal Writing

Grants Office will write a competitive and engaging proposal.

Grant Proposal Review

Grants Office will provide feedback on application materials, ensuring compliance with submission requirements.

Grants Office Communities

Find and share funding opportunities, manage proposals, collaborate, and access Grants Office Support.

Sign up for a **FREE 2-week trial!**

Questions?

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