

as amended and supplemented (P&S Act). This approval is required under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA).

DATES: We will consider comments that we receive by August 7, 2017.

ADDRESSES: We invite you to submit comments on this notice. You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Internet:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Hardcopy:* Mail, hand deliver, or courier to Dexter Thomas, GIPSA, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 2530-S, Washington, DC 20250-3604.
- *Fax:* (202) 690-2173.

Instructions: All comments should refer to the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register**. The information collection package, public comments and other documents relating to this action will be available for public inspection during regular business hours (7 CFR 1.27(b)). Please call GIPSA's Management and Budget Services at (202) 720-8479 to arrange a viewing of these documents.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Catherine Grasso, Program Analyst, Litigation and Economic Analysis Division at (202)720-7201 or Catherine.M.Grasso@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: GIPSA administers and enforces the P&S Act (7 U.S.C. 181-229, 229c). The P&S Act prohibits unfair, deceptive, and fraudulent practices by livestock market agencies, dealers, stockyard owners, meat packers, swine contractors, and live poultry dealers in the livestock, poultry, and meatpacking industries.

Title: Packers and Stockyards Program Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements.

OMB Number: 0580-0015.

Expiration Date of Approval: November 30, 2017.

Type of Request: Extension and revision of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The P&S Act and the regulations issued under the P&S Act authorize the collection of information for the purpose of enforcing the P&S Act and regulations and for conducting studies requested by Congress. Through the forms in this information collection, GIPSA's Packers and Stockyards Program (P&SP) gathers information that keeps P&SP current on the ownership and operations of regulated entities which permit P&SP oversight of the regulated entities. For example, P&SP gathers information regarding the number of head of livestock purchased

and the cost of the livestock to determine if the entity is adequately bonded to protect the livestock sellers. The information regarding the amount of livestock purchased is also consolidated for public reporting in GIPSA's annual report. Other financial information is gathered to determine if the regulated entities are operating while solvent as required by the P&S Act. This information collection is necessary for GIPSA to monitor and examine financial, competitive, and trade practices in the livestock, meat packing and poultry industries. The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public concerning GIPSA's information collection.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting and recordkeeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.73 hours per response.

Respondents (Affected Public): Livestock auction markets, livestock dealers, packer buyers, meat packers, and live poultry dealers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 22,900.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 3.2.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 348,328 hours.

As required by the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)) and its implementing regulations (5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1)(i)), GIPSA specifically requests comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3506 and 5 CFR 1320.8.

Randall D. Jones,

Acting Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration.

[FR Doc. 2017-11806 Filed 6-6-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-KD-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Inviting Applications for Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grants

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This Notice announces that the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (Agency) is accepting fiscal year (FY) 2017 applications for the Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant (SDGG) program. The Agency will publish the program funding level on the SDGG Web site located at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/socially-disadvantaged-groups-grant>. Expenses incurred in developing applications are the responsibility of the applicant.

The purpose of this program is to provide technical assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups in rural areas. Eligible applicants include Cooperatives, Groups of Cooperatives, and Cooperative Development Centers. This program supports Rural Development's (RD) mission of improving the quality of life for rural Americans and commitment to directing resources to those who most need them.

DATES: Completed applications for grants must be submitted on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

Paper copies must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight no later than August 1, 2017. You may also hand carry your application to one of our field offices, but it must be received by close of business on the deadline date.

Electronic copies must be received by <http://www.grants.gov> no later than midnight Eastern Time July 25, 2017. Late applications are not eligible for funding under this Notice and will not be evaluated.

ADDRESSES: You should contact the USDA Rural Development State Office (State Office) located in the State where you are headquartered if you have questions. Contact information for State Offices can be found at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>. You are encouraged to contact your State Office well in advance of the application deadline to discuss your project and ask any questions about the application process. Program guidance as well as application templates may be obtained at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/socially-disadvantaged-groups-grant> or by contacting your State Office.

If you want to submit an electronic application, follow the instructions for the SDGG funding announcement located at <http://www.grants.gov>. Please review the *Grants.gov* Web site at http://grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp for instructions on the process of registering your organization as soon as possible to ensure you are able to meet the electronic application deadline. You are strongly encouraged to file your application early and allow sufficient time to manage any technical issues that may arise. If you want to submit a paper application, send it to the State Office located in the State where you are headquartered. If you are headquartered in Washington, DC, please contact the Grants Division, Cooperative Programs, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, at (202) 690-1374 for guidance on where to submit your application.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Grants Division, Cooperative Programs, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., MS 3253, Room 4208-South, Washington, DC 20250-3250, or call 202-690-1374.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

Federal Agency Name: USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

Funding Opportunity Title: Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant.

Announcement Type: Initial Notice.

Catalog of Federal Domestic

Assistance Number: 10.871.

Dates: Application Deadline. You must submit your complete application by August 1, 2017, or it will not be considered for funding. Electronic applications must be received by <http://www.grants.gov> no later than midnight Eastern Time, July 25, 2017, or it will not be considered for funding.

Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, the paperwork burden associated with this Notice has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0570-0052.

A. Program Description

The SDGG program is authorized by section 310B (e)(11) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932 (e)(11)). The primary objective of the SDGG program is to provide Technical Assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. Grants are available for Cooperative Development Centers, individual

Cooperatives, or Groups of Cooperatives that serve Socially-Disadvantaged Groups and where a majority of their board of directors or governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups.

Definitions

The definitions you need to understand are as follows:

Agency—Rural Business-Cooperative Service, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development or a successor agency.

Conflict of Interest—A situation in which a person or entity has competing personal, professional, or financial interests that make it difficult for the person or business to act impartially. Federal procurement standards prohibit transactions that involve a real or apparent conflict of interest for owners, employees, officers, agents, or their immediate family members having a financial or other interest in the outcome of the project; or that restrict open and free competition for unrestrained trade. Specifically, project funds may not be used for services or goods going to, or coming from, a person or entity with a real or apparent conflict of interest, including, but not limited to, owner(s) and their immediate family members. Examples of conflicts of interest include using grant funds to pay a member of the applicant's board of directors to provide proposed Technical Assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups; pay a cooperative member to provide proposed Technical Assistance to other members of the same cooperative; and pay an immediate family member of the applicant to provide proposed Technical Assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups.

Cooperative—A business or organization owned by and operated for the benefit of those using its services and where a majority of the board of directors or governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. Profits and earnings generated by the cooperative are distributed among the members, also known as user-owners.

Cooperative Development Center—A nonprofit corporation or institution of higher education operated by the grantee for cooperative or business development and where a majority of the board of directors or governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. It may or may not be an independent legal entity separate from the grantee.

Feasibility Study—An analysis of the economic, market, technical, financial, and management feasibility of a proposed Project.

Group of Cooperatives—A group of Cooperatives whose primary focus is to provide assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups and where a majority of the board of directors or governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups.

Operating Cost—The day-to-day expenses of running a business; for example: Utilities, rent on the office space a business occupies, salaries, depreciation, marketing and advertising, and other basic overhead items.

Participant Support Costs—Direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects.

Project—Includes all activities to be funded by the Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant.

Rural and Rural Area—Any area of a State:

(1) Not in a city or town that has a population of more than 50,000 inhabitants, according to the latest decennial census of the United States; and

(2) The contiguous and adjacent urbanized area,

(3) Urbanized areas that are rural in character as defined by 7 U.S.C. 1991(a)(13).

(4) For the purposes of this definition, cities and towns are incorporated population centers with definite boundaries, local self-government, and legal powers set forth in a charter granted by the State. Notwithstanding any other provision of this paragraph, within the areas of the County of Honolulu, Hawaii, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Secretary may designate any part of the areas as a rural area if the Secretary determines that the part is not urban in character, other than any area included in the Honolulu census designated place (CDP) or the San Juan CDP.

Rural Development—A mission area within USDA consisting of the Office of Under Secretary for Rural Development, Rural Business-Cooperative Services, Rural Housing Service, and Rural Utilities Service and any successors.

Socially-Disadvantaged Group—A group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities.

State—Includes each of the 50 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and, as may be determined by the Secretary to be feasible, appropriate and lawful, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau.

Technical Assistance—An advisory service performed for the purpose of assisting Cooperatives or groups that want to form Cooperatives such as market research, product and/or service improvement, legal advice and assistance, Feasibility Study, business planning, marketing plan development, and training.

B. Federal Award Information

Type of Award: Competitive Grant.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2017.

Total Funding: \$3,000,000.

Maximum Award: \$175,000.

Project Period: 1 year.

Anticipated Award Date: September 29, 2017.

C. Eligibility Information

Applicants must meet all of the following eligibility requirements. Applications which fail to meet any of these requirements by the application deadline will be deemed ineligible and will not be evaluated further.

1. *Eligible Applicants.* Grants may be made to individual Cooperatives, Groups of Cooperatives, and Cooperative Development Centers that serve Socially-Disadvantaged Groups and where a majority of the board of directors or governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. Federally-recognized Tribes and tribal entities must demonstrate that they meet all definition requirements for one of the three eligible applicant types. You must be able to verify your legal structure in the State in which you are incorporated. Grants may not be made to public bodies or to individuals.

(a) An applicant is ineligible if they have been debarred or suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs under Executive Order 12549, "Debarment and Suspension." In addition, an applicant will be considered ineligible for a grant due to an outstanding judgment obtained by the U.S. in a Federal Court (other than U.S. Tax Court), is delinquent on the payment of Federal income taxes, or is delinquent on Federal debt.

(b) Any corporation (i) that has been convicted of a felony criminal violation

under any Federal law within the past 24 months or (ii) that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, is not eligible for financial assistance provided with funds appropriated by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Pub. L. 114–113), unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching.* No matching funds are required.

3. *Other Eligibility Requirements.*

Use of Funds: Your application must propose Technical Assistance that will benefit Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. Cooperatives that are recipients of Technical Assistance must have a membership that consists of a majority of members from Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. Please review section D (6) of this Notice, "Funding Restrictions," carefully.

Project Eligibility: The proposed Project must only serve members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups in Rural Areas.

Grant Period Eligibility: Your application must include a grant period of one-year or less or it will not be considered for funding. The proposed time frame should begin no earlier than the grant award date and end no later than December 31, 2018. However, you should note that the anticipated award date is September 29, 2017, so your proposed start date should be after September 29, 2017. Projects must be completed within the 12-months or less time frame. The Agency may approve requests to extend the grant period for up to an additional 12 months at its discretion. Further guidance on grant period extensions will be provided in the award document.

However, you may not have more than one active SDGG during the same grant period. If you receive another SDGG during the next grant cycle, the first grant must be closed before funds can be obligated for the new grant. Applications that request funds for a time period ending after December 31, 2018, will not be considered for funding.

Satisfactory Performance Eligibility: If you have an existing SDGG award, you must be performing satisfactorily to be considered eligible for a new SDGG award. Satisfactory performance

includes being up-to-date on all financial and performance reports and being current on all tasks as approved in the work plan. The Agency will use its discretion to make this determination. In addition, if you have an existing award from the Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) program, you must discuss the status of your existing RCDG award at application time and be performing satisfactorily to be considered for a new SDGG award.

Completeness Eligibility: Your application must provide all of the information requested in Section D (2) of this Notice. Applications lacking sufficient information to determine eligibility and scoring will be considered ineligible.

Multiple Grant Eligibility: You may only submit one SDGG grant application each funding cycle.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address To Request Application Package

The application template for applying on paper for this funding opportunity is located at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/socially-disadvantaged-groups-grant>. Use of the application template is strongly recommended to assist you with the application process. You may also contact your USDA Rural Development State Office for more information. Contact information for State Offices is located at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>. You may also obtain an application package by calling 202–690–1374.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

You may submit your application in paper form or electronically through *Grants.gov*. Your application must contain all required information.

To submit an application electronically, you must follow the instructions for this funding announcement at <http://www.grants.gov>. Please note that we cannot accept emailed or faxed applications.

You can locate the *Grants.gov* downloadable application package for this program by using a keyword, the program name, or the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number for this program.

When you enter the *Grants.gov* Web site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

To use *Grants.gov*, you must already have a DUNS number and you must also be registered and maintain registration in SAM. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through *Grants.gov*.

You must submit all of your application documents electronically through *Grants.gov*. Applications must include electronic signatures. Original signatures may be required if funds are awarded.

After electronically submitting an application through *Grants.gov*, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from *Grants.gov* that contains a *Grants.gov* tracking number.

If you want to submit a paper application, send it to the State Office located in the State where you are headquartered. You can find State Office contact information at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>.

Your application must also contain the following required forms and proposal elements:

(a) Form SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance," to include your DUNS number and SAM Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code and expiration date. Because there are no specific fields for a CAGE code and expiration date, you may identify them anywhere you want to on the form. If you do not include your DUNS number in your application, it will not be considered for funding.

(b) Form SF-424A, "Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs." This form must be completed and submitted as part of the application package.

(c) Form SF-424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs." This form must be completed, signed, and submitted as part of the application package.

(d) Form AD-3030, "Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants," if you are a corporation. A corporation is any entity that has filed articles of incorporation in one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the various territories of the United States including American Samoa, Guam, Midway Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands. Corporations include both for profit and non-profit entities.

(e) You must certify that there are no current outstanding Federal judgments against your property and that you will

not use grant funds to pay for any judgment obtained by the United States. You must also certify that you are not delinquent on the payment of Federal income taxes, or any Federal debt. To satisfy the Certification requirement, you should include this statement in your application: "[INSERT NAME OF APPLICANT] certifies that the United States has not obtained an unsatisfied judgment against its property, is not delinquent on the payment of Federal income taxes, or any Federal debt, and will not use grant funds to pay any judgments obtained by the United States." A separate signature is not required.

(f) Table of Contents. Your application must contain a detailed Table of Contents (TOC). The TOC must include page numbers for each part of the application. Page numbers should begin immediately following the TOC.

(g) Executive Summary. A summary of the proposal, not to exceed one page, must briefly describe the Project, tasks to be completed, and other relevant information that provides a general overview of the Project.

(h) Eligibility Discussion. A detailed discussion, not to exceed four pages, must describe how you meet the following requirements:

(1) Applicant Eligibility. You must describe how you meet the definition of a Cooperative, Group of Cooperatives, or Cooperative Development Center. Your application must show that your individual Cooperative, Group of Cooperatives or Cooperative Development Center serves Socially-Disadvantaged Groups and a majority of the board of directors or governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. Your application must include a list of your board of directors/governing board and the percentage of board of directors/governing board that are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. NOTE: Your application will not be considered for funding if you fail to show that a majority of your board of directors/governing board is comprised of individuals who are members of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups.

If applying as a Cooperative or a Group of Cooperatives, you must verify your incorporation and status in the State that you have applied by providing the State's Certificate of Good Standing and your Articles of Incorporation. You may also submit your By-laws if they provide additional information not included in your Articles of Incorporation that will verify your status as a Cooperative or a Group of Cooperatives. If applying as a nonprofit corporation, you must provide

evidence of your status as a nonprofit corporation in good standing and your Articles of Incorporation. If applying as an institution of higher education, you must qualify as an Institution of Higher Education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001. You must apply as only one type of applicant. The requested verification documents should be included in Appendix A of your application. If they are not included, your application will not be considered for funding.

(2) Use of Funds. You must provide a brief discussion on how the proposed Project activities meet the definition of Technical Assistance and identify the Socially-Disadvantaged Groups that will be assisted.

(3) Project Area. You must provide specific information that details the location of the Project area and explain how the area meets the definition of "Rural Area."

(4) Grant Period. You must provide a time frame for the proposed Project and discuss how the Project will be completed within that time frame. You must have a time frame of one year or less.

(5) Satisfactory Performance. If you have an existing SDGG and/or RCDG award, you must discuss the current status of the award(s).

(6) Indirect Costs. Your negotiated indirect cost rate approval does not need to be included in your application, but you will be required to provide it if a grant is awarded. Approval for indirect costs that are requested in an application without an approved indirect cost rate agreement is at the discretion of the Agency.

(i) Scoring Criteria. Each of the scoring criteria in this Notice must be addressed in narrative form, with a maximum of three pages for each individual scoring criterion, unless otherwise specified. Failure to address each scoring criteria will result in the application being determined ineligible.

(j) The Agency has established annual performance evaluation measures to evaluate the SDGG program. You must provide estimates on the following performance evaluation measures as part of your narrative:

- Number of cooperatives assisted; and
- Number of socially disadvantaged groups assisted.

3. DUNS Number and SAM

In order to be eligible (unless you are excepted under 2 CFR 25.110(b), (c) or (d), you are required to:

(a) Provide a valid DUNS number in your application, which can be obtained at no cost via a toll-free request line at (866) 705-5711;

(b) Register in SAM before submitting your application. You may register in SAM at no cost at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>. You must provide your SAM Cage Code and expiration date or evidence that you have begun the SAM registration process at time of application, and

(c) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which you have an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

If you have not fully complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements, the Agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and the Agency may use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. Please refer to Section F. 2 for additional submission requirements that apply to grantees selected for this program.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Application Deadline Date: August 1, 2017.

Explanation of Deadlines: Paper applications must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight by August 1, 2017. The Agency will determine whether your application is late based on the date shown on the postmark or shipping invoice. You may also hand carry your application to one of our field offices, but it must be received by close of business on the deadline date. If the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the reporting package is due the next business day. Late applications are not eligible for funding and will not be evaluated further.

Electronic applications must be RECEIVED by <http://www.grants.gov> by midnight Eastern Time July 25, 2017, to be eligible for funding. Please review the *Grants.gov* Web site at http://grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp for instructions on the process of registering your organization as soon as possible to ensure you are able to meet the electronic application deadline. *Grants.gov* will not accept applications submitted after the deadline.

5. Intergovernmental Review

Executive Order (EO) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, is listed as applying to this program, however since this program is comprised of the provision of technical assistance which is of a non-construction nature the intergovernmental review process is not required.

You are also encouraged to contact Cooperative Programs at 202-690-1374 or cpgrants@wdc.usda.gov if you have questions about this process.

6. Funding Restrictions

Grant funds must be used for Technical Assistance. No funds made available under this solicitation shall be used to:

(a) Plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construct a building or facility, including a processing facility;

(b) Purchase, rent, or install fixed equipment, including processing equipment;

(c) Purchase vehicles, including boats;

(d) Pay for the preparation of the grant application;

(e) Pay expenses not directly related to the funded Project;

(f) Fund political or lobbying activities;

(g) To fund any activities considered unallowable by the applicable grant cost principles, including 2 CFR part 200, subpart E and the Federal Acquisition Regulation;

(h) Fund architectural or engineering design work for a specific physical facility;

(i) Fund any direct expenses for the production of any commodity or product to which value will be added, including seed, rootstock, labor for harvesting the crop, and delivery of the commodity to a processing facility;

(j) Fund research and development;

(k) Purchase land;

(l) Duplicate current activities or activities paid for by other Federal grant programs;

(m) Pay costs of the Project incurred prior to the date of grant approval;

(n) Pay for assistance to any private business enterprise that does not have at least 51 percent ownership by those who are either citizens of the United States or reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence;

(o) Pay any judgment or debt owed to the United States;

(p) Pay any Operating Costs of the Cooperative, Group of Cooperatives, or Cooperative Development Center not directly related to the Project;

(q) Pay expenses for applicant employee training or professional development not directly related to the Project; or

(r) Pay for any goods or services from a person who has a Conflict of Interest with the grantee.

(s) Pay for Technical Assistance provided to a Cooperative that does not have a membership that consists of a majority of members from Socially-Disadvantaged Groups.

In addition, your application will not be considered for funding if it does any of the following:

- Requests more than the maximum grant amount;
- Proposes ineligible costs that equal more than 10 percent of total grant funds requested; or
- Proposes Participant Support Costs that equal more than 10 percent of total grant funds requested.

We will consider your application for funding if it includes ineligible costs of 10 percent or less of total grant funds requested, as long as it is determined eligible otherwise. However, if your application is successful, those ineligible costs must be removed and replaced with eligible costs before the Agency will make the grant award or the amount of the grant award will be reduced accordingly. If we cannot determine the percentage of ineligible costs, your application will not be considered for funding.

7. Other Submission Requirements

(a) You should not submit your application in more than one format. You must choose whether to submit your application in hard copy or electronically. Applications submitted in hard copy should be mailed or hand-delivered to the State Office located in the State where you are headquartered. You can find State Office contact information at: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/state-offices>. To submit an application electronically, you must follow the instructions for this funding announcement at <http://www.grants.gov>. A password is not required to access the Web site.

(b) National Environmental Policy Act. This Notice has been reviewed in accordance with 7 CFR part 1970, "Environmental Policies and Procedures." We have determined that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required because the issuance of regulations and instructions, as well as amendments to them, describing administrative and financial procedures for processing, approving, and implementing the Agency's financial programs is categorically excluded in the Agency's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulation found at 7 CFR 1970.53(f). We have determined that this Notice does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

The Agency will review each grant application to determine its compliance with 7 CFR part 1970. The applicant may be asked to provide additional information or documentation to assist the Agency with this determination.

(c) Civil Rights Compliance Requirements. All grants made under this Notice are subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as required by the USDA (7 CFR part 15, subpart A) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

E. Application Review Information

1. Scoring Criteria

All eligible and complete applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria. Failure to address any one of the following criteria by the application deadline will result in the application being determined ineligible and the application will not be considered for funding. Evaluators will base scores only on the information provided or cross-referenced by page number in each individual scoring criterion. SDGG is a competitive program, so you will receive scores based on the quality of your responses. Simply addressing the criteria will not guarantee higher scores. The total points possible for the criteria are 100.

(a) *Technical Assistance (maximum score of 25 points)*. A panel of USDA employees will evaluate your application to determine your ability to assess the needs of and provide effective Technical Assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. You must discuss the:

(1) Needs of the Socially-Disadvantaged Groups to be assisted and explain how those needs were determined,

(2) Proposed Technical Assistance to be provided to the Socially-Disadvantaged Groups; and

(3) Expected outcomes of the proposed Technical Assistance, including how Socially-Disadvantaged Groups will benefit from participating in the Project. You will score higher on this criterion if you provide examples of past projects that demonstrate successful outcomes in identifying specific needs and providing Technical Assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups.

(b) *Experience (maximum score of 25 points)*. A panel of USDA employees will evaluate your experience, commitment and availability for identified staff or consultants in providing Technical Assistance, as defined in this Notice. You must describe the Technical Assistance experience for each identified staff member or consultant, as well as years of experience in providing that assistance. You must also discuss the commitment and the availability of identified staff, consultants, or other professionals to be hired for the

project—especially those who may be consulting on multiple SDGG/RCDG projects. If staff or consultants have not been selected at the time of application, you must provide specific descriptions of the qualifications required for the positions to be filled. In addition, resumes for each individual staff member or consultant must be included as an attachment in Appendix B. The attachments will not count toward the maximum page total. We will compare the described experience in this section and in the resumes to the work plan to determine relevance of the experience. Applications that do not include the attached resumes will not be considered for funding.

Applications that demonstrate strong credentials, education, capabilities, experience and availability of Project personnel that will contribute to a high likelihood of Project success will receive more points than those that demonstrate less potential for success in these areas.

Points will be awarded as follows:

(i) 0 points will be awarded if you do not substantively address the criterion.

(ii) 1–9 points will be awarded if qualifications and experience of some, but not all, staff is addressed and/or if necessary qualifications of unfilled positions are not provided.

(iii) 10–14 points will be awarded if all project personnel are identified but do not demonstrate qualifications or experience relevant to the project.

(iv) 15–19 will be awarded if most, but not all, key personnel demonstrate strong credentials and/or experience, and availability indicating a reasonable likelihood of success.

(v) 20–25 points will be awarded if all personnel demonstrate strong, relevant credentials or experience, and availability indicating a high likelihood of project success.

(c) *Commitment (maximum of 10 points)*. A panel of USDA employees will evaluate your commitment to providing Technical Assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups in Rural Areas. You must list the number and location of Socially-Disadvantaged Groups that will directly benefit from the assistance provided. You must also define and describe the underserved and economically distressed areas within your service area and provide current and relevant statistics that support your description of the service area. Projects located in persistent poverty counties as defined by USDA's Economic Research Service will score higher on this factor.

(d) *Work Plan/Budget (maximum of 25 points)—Six page limit*. Your work plan must provide specific and detailed

descriptions of the tasks and the key project personnel that will accomplish the project's goals. Budget will be reviewed for completeness. You must list what tasks are to be done, when it will be done, who will do it, and how much it will cost. Reviewers must be able to understand what is being proposed and how the grant funds will be spent. The budget must be a detailed breakdown of estimated costs. These costs should be allocated to each of the tasks to be undertaken. The amount of grant funds requested will be reduced if the applicant does not have justification for all costs.

A panel of USDA employees will evaluate your work plan for detailed actions and an accompanying timetable for implementing the proposal. Clear, logical, realistic, and efficient plans that allocate costs to specific tasks using applicable budget object class categories provided on the Form SF-424A will result in a higher score. You must discuss at a minimum:

(i) Specific tasks to be completed using grant funds;

(ii) How customers will be identified;

(iii) Key personnel; and

(iv) The evaluation methods to be used to determine the success of specific tasks and overall project objectives. Please provide qualitative methods of evaluation. For example, evaluation methods should go beyond quantitative measurements of completing surveys or number of evaluations.

(e) *Local support (maximum of 10 points)*. A panel of USDA employees will evaluate your application for local support of the Technical Assistance activities. Your discussion on local support should include previous and/or expected local support and plans for coordinating with other developmental organizations in the proposed service area or with state and local government institutions. You will score higher if you demonstrate strong support from potential beneficiaries and other developmental organizations. You may also submit a maximum of 10 letters of support or intent to coordinate with the application to verify your discussion.

Points will be awarded as follows:

(i) 0 points are awarded if you do not adequately address this criterion.

(ii) 1–5 points are awarded if you demonstrate support from potential beneficiaries and other developmental organizations in your discussion but do not provide letters of support.

(iii) Additional 1 point is awarded if you provide 2–3 support letters that show support from potential beneficiaries and/or support from local organizations.

(iv) Additional 2 points are awarded if you provide 4–5 support letters that show support from potential beneficiaries and/or support from local organizations.

(v) Additional 3 points are awarded if you provide 6–7 support letters that show support from potential beneficiaries and/or support from local organizations.

(vi) Additional 4 points are awarded if you provide 8–9 support letters that show support from potential beneficiaries and/or support from local organizations.

(vii) Additional 5 points are awarded if you provide 10 support letters that show support from potential beneficiaries and/or support from local organizations.

You may submit a maximum of 10 letters of support. Support letters should come from potential beneficiaries and other local organizations. Letters received from Congressional members and Technical Assistance providers will not be included in the count of support letters received. Additionally, identical form letters signed by multiple potential beneficiaries and/or local organizations will not be included in the count of support letters received. Support letters should be included as an attachment to the application in Appendix C and will not count against the maximum page total. Additional letters from industry groups, commodity groups, Congressional members, and similar organizations should be referenced, but not included in the application package. When referencing these letters, provide the name of the organization, date of the letter, the nature of the support, and the name and title of the person signing the letter.

(f) *Administrator Discretionary Points (maximum of 5 points)*. The Administrator of the Agency may choose to award up to 5 points to an application to improve the geographic diversity of awardees or to prioritize projects that provide assistance to unserved or underserved Rural Areas in a fiscal year.

2. Review and Selection Process

The State Offices will review applications to determine if they are eligible for assistance based on requirements in this Notice, and other applicable Federal regulations. If determined eligible, your application will be scored by a panel of USDA employees in accordance with the point allocation specified in this Notice. The panel will consist of USDA employees with expertise in providing Technical Assistance to Socially-Disadvantaged Groups. The review panel will convene

to reach a consensus on the scores for each of the eligible applications. A recommendation will be submitted to the Administrator to fund applications in highest ranking order. The Administrator of the Agency may choose to award up to 5 Administrator priority points based on criterion (f) in section E.1. of this Notice. These points will be added to the cumulative score for a total possible score of 100. Applications that cannot be fully funded may be offered partial funding at the Agency's discretion. If your application is ranked and not funded, it will not be carried forward into the next competition.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

1. Federal Award Notices

If you are selected for funding, you will receive a signed notice of Federal award by postal mail, containing instructions on requirements necessary to proceed with execution and performance of the award.

If you are not selected for funding, you will be notified in writing via postal mail and informed of any review and appeal rights. Funding of successfully appealed applications will be limited to available FY 2017 funding.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Additional requirements that apply to grantees selected for this program can be found in 2 CFR parts 200, 215, 400, 415, 417, 418, and 421. All recipients of Federal financial assistance are required to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation (See 2 CFR part 170). You will be required to have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act reporting requirements (See 2 CFR 170.200(b), unless you are exempt under 2 CFR 170.110(b)). These regulations may be obtained at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>.

The following additional requirements apply to grantees selected for this program:

- Agency approved Grant Agreement.
- Letter of Conditions.
- Form RD 1940–1, “Request for Obligation of Funds.”
- Form RD 1942–46, “Letter of Intent to Meet Conditions.”
- Form AD–1047, “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters-Primary Covered Transactions.”
- Form AD–1048, “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension,

Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions.”

- Form AD–1049, “Certification Regarding a Drug-Free Workplace Requirement (Grants).”

- Form AD–3031, “Assurance Regarding Felony Conviction or Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants.” Must be signed by corporate applicants who receive an award under this Notice.

- Form RD 400–4, “Assurance Agreement.”

- SF LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” if applicable.

3. Reporting

After grant approval and through grant completion, you will be required to provide the following:

a. A SF–425, “Federal Financial Report,” and a project performance report will be required on a semiannual basis (due 30 working days after end of the semiannual period). For the purposes of this grant, semiannual periods end on March 31st and September 30th. The project performance reports shall include the following: A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives established for that period;

b. Reasons why established objectives were not met, if applicable;

c. Reasons for any problems, delays, or adverse conditions, if any, which have affected or will affect attainment of overall project objectives, prevent meeting time schedules or objectives, or preclude the attainment of particular objectives during established time periods. This disclosure shall be accompanied by a statement of the action taken or planned to resolve the situation; and

d. Objectives and timetable established for the next reporting period.

e. Provide a final project and financial status report within 90 days after the expiration or termination of the grant.

f. Provide outcome project performance reports and final deliverables.

G. Agency Contacts

For general questions about this announcement and for program Technical Assistance, please contact the appropriate State Office as indicated in the **ADDRESSES** section of this Notice. You may also contact National Office staff: Susan Horst, SDGG Program Lead, Susan.Horst@wdc.usda.gov, or call 202–690–1374.

H. Other Information

Non Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) *Mail:* U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410;
- (2) *Fax:* (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) *Email:* program.intake@usda.gov.

Dated: May 26, 2017.

Chadwick O. Parker,

Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 2017-11739 Filed 6-6-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS**Request for Comments on the Broadcasting Board of Governors' Implementation of a Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch**

AGENCY: Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: Executive Order 13781, "Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch," signed into effect on March 13, 2017, directs the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to present the President with a plan that recommends ways to reorganize the executive branch and eliminate unnecessary agencies. As part of this process, the Broadcasting Board of Governors will be submitting a proposal for reorganization to OMB. This request for comments seeks public input on potential reforms at the BBG that would increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the agency. These comments will also be considered in the development of the BBG's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.

The BBG is the federal agency charged with carrying out U.S. Government funded international media, overseeing the operations of five media networks: the Voice of America (VOA), Radio and TV Marti, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Radio Free Asia (RFA), and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN).

DATES: Submit either electronic comments or information by June 30, 2017. We will not accept comments by fax or paper delivery.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments through the BBG Web site at <https://www.bbg.gov/submit-your-ideas/>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Matt Ciepielowski at 202-203-4845.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Through this request for comments, the BBG is seeking initial feedback from a broad range of stakeholders on questions that will contribute to the BBG's proposal to OMB in accordance with Executive Order 13781 and the BBG's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan. This request for comments is for information-gathering and fact-finding purposes only, and should not be construed as a solicitation or as an obligation on the part of the BBG to agree with submitted comments or to make recommendations regarding specific issues identified in public comments. The BBG requests that respondents generally address the following overarching questions:

- What are the most important or effective projects or programs that the BBG undertakes?

- Do you think that there are any changes that BBG could make to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of its media networks or the agency itself? If so, please describe those changes.

- Would you propose reorganizing any parts or aspects of the BBG or its media networks to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability? If so, how?

- In today's changing media landscape, how should the BBG adapt to best serve its mission to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy?

Oanh Tran,

Director of Board Operations, Broadcasting Board of Governors.

[FR Doc. 2017-11832 Filed 6-6-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 86100-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**Foreign-Trade Zones Board**

[B-27-2017]

Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) 43—Battle Creek, Michigan, Notification of Proposed Production Activity, Pfizer, Inc., (Pharmaceutical Products), Kalamazoo, Michigan

Pfizer Inc. (Pfizer) submitted a notification of proposed production activity to the FTZ Board for its facility in Kalamazoo, Michigan within Subzone 43E. The notification conforming to the requirements of the regulations of the FTZ Board (15 CFR 400.22) was received on April 12, 2017.

Pfizer already has authority to produce certain pharmaceutical products within Subzone 43E. The current request would add finished products and a foreign status material/component to the scope of authority. Pursuant to 15 CFR 400.14(b), additional FTZ authority would be limited to the specific foreign-status material/component and specific finished products described in the submitted notification (as described below) and subsequently authorized by the FTZ Board.

Production under FTZ procedures could exempt Pfizer from customs duty payments on the foreign-status material/components used in export production. On its domestic sales, Pfizer would be able to choose the duty rate during customs entry procedures that apply to crisorole (Eucrisa™) (duty free) in finished product and bulk form for the