



### Opportunity

Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (Northwest SEED) is seeking organizations to partner with on clean energy capacity-building and technical assistance under U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI).

### Organization:

Northwest SEED works to establish a clean, diverse, and affordable Northwest energy system based on efficient use of renewable resources, with maximum local control and ownership of energy assets.

Since 2001, we've been focused on helping communities throughout the Northwest harness the many advantages of on-the-ground renewable energy, energy conservation and efficiency projects. By making sustainable energy sources a reality, we can eliminate our dependence on fossil fuels and improve quality of life.

Our services include:

- Community Energy Planning
- Project Management – Concept to Commissioning
- Resource Evaluation
- Feasibility Analysis
- Economic Modeling
- Assistance with Project Financing
- Permitting and Environmental Compliance
- Procurement and Contractor Selection
- Community Outreach, Organizing & Education
- Capacity Building and Training
- Workshop Development and Delivery

To learn more about Northwest SEED visit: [www.nwseed.org](http://www.nwseed.org).

### Overview

USDA's RCDI grant program provides matching funds to nonprofit organizations, low-income rural communities, or federally recognized tribes to undertake capacity-building projects, including renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements. A successful grantee of previous RCDI funds, Northwest SEED is now preparing for the next RCDI funding opportunity and is seeking project partners.

### RCDI Structure

The RCDI structure requires an *intermediary* (the grantee) to provide a program of financial and technical assistance to *recipients*. This assistance will build the capacity of the recipients to, in turn, provide programs to their community *beneficiaries*.

For example, Northwest SEED (the grantee and *intermediary*) recently provided financial and technical assistance to two Northwest Indian Tribes (*recipients*) to develop tribal energy plans that resulted in benefits to their community members (*beneficiaries*). Northwest SEED's technical assistance included: (1) the development of a comprehensive Tribal Energy Plan, and (2) the implementation of clean energy projects that have been determined to be feasible and capable of delivering greatest positive impact.

### Eligibility

Northwest SEED meets the eligibility requirements for grantee and intermediary. The recipients must be private, nonprofit, including faith-based organizations, community-based housing and development organizations, low-income rural communities, or federally recognized tribes. **Individuals cannot be recipients.** Recipients, and their beneficiaries, must be located in rural areas, defined by the USDA as cities with populations of 50,000 or less.

To learn more about USDA's RCDI program and the qualifications to participate visit:  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/rcdi/index.htm>

### USDA RCDI Grant Funding

Grant floor and ceiling amounts will be listed in the notice of funds availability (NOFA), for the 2009 RCDI program. In 2008, grant amounts ranged from \$50,000 - \$300,000 per project. We are expecting the funding levels to be similar for 2009. Grant funds must be **matched by cash funds at least equal** to the requested grant amount. It is therefore important for interested partners to have potential match sources in mind.

### Process

If you feel your community and/or project could benefit from Northwest SEED's technical assistance and capacity building services under the RCDI program, please fill out the project information form and email it to: [info@nwseed.org](mailto:info@nwseed.org). Northwest SEED will be in touch with the respondents that meet USDA RCDI eligibility, are matched well with Northwest SEED's expertise and have the highest potential for success. Northwest SEED will work closely with the chosen community/project to prepare and submit an application for the next grant round, anticipated to be early summer 2009.

*\*\*This solicitation is in preparation for responding to USDA's RCDI 2009 NOFA. The actual NOFA has yet to be published. \*\**