

Rural Partners Funding Assistance Criteria

Mission of Rural Partners

Rural Partners is a member-driven forum that links individuals, businesses, organizations and communities with public and private resources to maximize the potential of rural Illinois.

Goals of Rural Partners

1. To maintain points of contact for information, assistance and resource development.
2. To promote rural community and economic development activities.
3. To encourage private/public partnerships for rural communities and economic development.
4. To strengthen the leadership capacity in rural Illinois.
5. To increase collaboration among local governments and communities in Illinois.
6. To participate in federal and state government initiatives for rural development.
7. To influence public policy by representing the comprehensive needs of rural residents.
8. To enhance, to promote and to acknowledge the individual and collective efforts of the membership.

Purpose of Funding Assistance

Rural Partners seeks to:

- Support and leverage investments of communities and organizations to maximize the potential of rural Illinois.
- Develop models of successful development or innovation that could be useful across the state.
- Create incentives for collaborative approaches to issues of importance to rural communities.
- Develop venues for rural issues to gain statewide visibility.
- Develop efficient processes to address issues of importance to rural communities.
- Support collaborative, change-oriented projects that respond to or address a need evident or identified at the community level.

Criteria for Proposals

- Alignment with one or more of the Rural Partners goals.
- Technical merit:
 - Are proposed activities adequate to address the issue and appropriate for the purpose and scope?
 - Are objectives and goals clearly defined, with measureable outcomes?
 - Is the budget appropriate and sufficient?
 - Are previous and existing programs acknowledged and considered in the proposal?
- Feasibility:
 - Does the project team have the expertise, capacity and networks to successfully complete the project?
 - Is the project, as proposed, feasible within the timeframe, budget, and scope?
- Relevance:
 - Does the proposed project address issues which are important or expected to be important in our state?
 - How quickly will the project provide value to rural communities in our state?
 - Will the project produce information, recommendations, or tools which will be useful for decision-makers at the local, state, or national level?
 - Are community partners, or other stakeholders, partners in the project?
 - Does the proposed project leverage existing resources or relationships?