

Securing State
and Federal
Resources for
Rural
Communities



sequoia

Creating Thriving Rural Communities

www.sequoiaconsulting.org

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Creating Thriving Rural Communities



Sequoia Consulting

Sequoia Consulting is a social enterprise focused on helping rural communities thrive. Sequoia Consulting provides resource development, technical assistance, and new initiative support to rural jurisdictions, non-profits, and special districts. For more information, go to www.sequoiaconsulting.com

WORKSHOP GOALS

- Identify your communities assets and gaps in securing federal resources
- Determine your readiness and competitiveness to apply for funding
- Identify resources and solutions for your community





Ice Breaker

Instructions

- Introduce yourself at your table, or with the people standing next to you
- Come up with 1-2 words that describe the challenges your jurisdiction faces in securing federal funding

Assets Needed for a Competitive Application

- Well developed project (goals, deliverables, timeline, budgets, partners)
- Demonstrable Community Support (letters of support, etc.)
- Financial match
- Multi-stakeholder support (public, private, nonprofit)
- Internal or external capacity to apply for and manage grants
- Technical expertise if needed (engineers, planners, etc.)
- Internal grant management and financial policies
- Support of local and state elected representatives





Map Your Assets

In your group (same as ice breaker), discuss what assets you have in your community to apply for and manage federal grants



Pathways to Rural Federal Funding

Three greatest challenges to securing federal resources in rural communities

1 **capacity**

2 **expertise**

3 **external resources**



50%

50% of the organizations applied for federal funding since the pandemic began.

46.7%

Only about half of respondents were aware of federal funding opportunities that they might qualify for.

83.3%

Over 83% of respondents plan on applying for federal funding in 2022.

The biggest challenges for respondents who did apply for federal funding since 2020, were:

- knowing where to look for opportunities
- completing the application
- knowing if they are eligible for funding
- having the capacity to manage federal funding
- other.

SUCCESSFUL MODELS AND BEST PRACTICES

- Recommendations from The Pathways To Rural Federal Funding Report
- Central Oregon Intergovernmental Organization Technical Assistance Model
- Oregon Economic Development District Grant Support Model



EXPERTISE

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create and disseminate federal grant readiness assessment
- Connect small, rural organizations and jurisdictions to existing coalitions
- Provide grants for planning, engineering and design, coalition building and to hire grant-writers

MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide grants and technical assistance
- Provide multi-year grant support for staffing

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a technical assistance model of grant-writing/project management teams across rural communities that are based in economic development agencies/other regional organizations

CAPACITY

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a live federal prospects document
- Staff data-navigator position(s) for rural communities
- Staff prospecting/eligibility navigator position(s) for rural communities
- Investment in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives in rural communities

MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Engage agency-specific grant-writers
- Provide training on monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems (ME&L)
- Provide grant-writing training

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Advocacy on simplifying federal and state applications so that rural areas are not left out of the process
- Provide training on the legislative process and how it impacts funding streams
- Advocate with federal agency representatives to do more outreach in rural jurisdictions

RESOURCES

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide letters of support for communities applying for federal funding
- Developing a pooled (multiple Foundations) responsive match fund will allow rural organizations and jurisdictions to meet the eligibility requirements for cost-share

MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide training and resources to rural organizations and jurisdictions about ways to explore multiple-funding scenarios, such as “one-stops” (a meeting held with multiple funders at one time)

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Regional grant-writing model

- Grant-writers as staff and/or consultants
- Provides support to jurisdictions around prospecting, writing case statements, depending on capacity—writing full applications

Regional Project Development-start to finish

- Builds on relationships & trust with local jurisdictions
- Provides different levels of support depending on where jurisdiction is in project development cycle
- Brings in external contracts to support their internal team

TAKE READINESS THE ASSESSMENT

Group discussion: Share your
biggest challenges/gaps in
securing federal funding?



CLOSING

- Identify your communities assets and gaps in securing federal resources
- Determine your readiness and competitiveness to apply for funding
- Identify resources and solutions for your community

One-on-One mentoring is available in person tomorrow, and next week virtually. Sign-up sheet is located at the entrance.



Contact Information

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