



Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: Funding Opportunities for Rural Economic Development Projects

By CED Guest Author

Article: <https://ced.sog.unc.edu/funding-opportunities-for-rural-economic-development-projects/>

This entry was posted on November 30, 2009 and is filed under Caswell County, Community-Campus Partnership, Economic Development, Financing Development, Lenoir County



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Deadlines are approaching for several grant and loan programs focused on rural community and economic development in North Carolina. The North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center has more than \$30 million in grants and loans to invest in rural communities in North Carolina for job creating projects. Importantly, these dollars need to be committed during fiscal year 2010. Two programs that may be of particular interest:

1. Economic Innovation Grants: Priority areas for these grants include rural manufacturing innovation, growth of the green economy, community-based economic innovation, and pathways out of poverty for working individuals and families. This grant program provides a wide range of opportunity for innovative community-based projects. It includes seed funding up to \$75,000 and large-scale project funding up to \$400,000. Eligible applicants are units of local government, nonprofit organizations and educational institutions located within North Carolina's 85 rural counties. Also eligible are statewide and regional organizations and agencies serving rural counties. **Letters of interest due on December 31, 2009.**

2. North Carolina Small Town Economic Prosperity Program (NC STEP): Ten small towns in North Carolina (population <10,000) will be selected to join NC STEP this spring. NC STEP is designed to spur economic activity, innovation, and job creation in small towns through strategic resource investments. Successful applicants will participate in the demonstration for two years and will receive coaching, technical assistance and training. Each town will be eligible for a planning grant up to \$25,000 and implementation grant up to \$100,000. **Application deadline February 12, 2010.**

The Community-Campus Partnership wants to partner with community-based organizations on projects in Caswell and Lenoir Counties.

*Will Lambe authored the NC Rural Center report, *Small Towns, Big Ideas*, and he served as Director of the Community and Economic Development Program at the School of Government from 2009 to 2014.*