



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

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CDFA USDA Rural Development Partnership

Columbus, OH – The national Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA) is excited to announce a two-year partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development. This initiative will first focus on an increase in development finance education and resources for USDA’s internal staff of 3,800+ field representatives. The initiative will also promote USDA funding and financing best practices for rural communities to CDFA’s network of over 22,000 development finance stakeholders.

“CDFA is excited to build a partnership with the USDA to promote financing best practices and quality development in rural communities throughout the country,” said CDFA President & CEO Toby Rittner. “We are enthusiastic to connect rural communities and their potential projects with financing professionals in order to help facilitate sustainable progress.”

“Community economic development is at the core of what we do at USDA-RD,” said Doug O’Brien, Under Secretary, Rural Development U.S. Department of Agriculture (Acting). “We depend on the insight and the inspiration of our partners at the local level to help them realize their communities’ goals for the future. Our partnership with CDFA puts us in an even stronger position to help rural America make those goals a reality.”

First, CDFA will design a tailored four-part training series, each four hours in length, specifically for USDA field staff and leadership. Primarily, the training series will be offered online using CDFA’s highly-acclaimed distance learning capabilities. The training series will cover the Fundamentals of Development Finance, Food Systems Finance, Building Rural Infrastructure, and Rural Rebirth through Financing.

The second phase of the partnership will be the creation of a unique USDA Rural Project Marketplace, which will be an interactive opportunity to connect rural projects with financing. Rural communities will have the opportunity to present prospective projects to a diverse group of potential partners such as banks, foundations, consultants, CDFIs, investors, and financial advisors.

Finally, ten diverse rural development projects that best represent the practices in the use of financing will be featured in a publication written by CDFA. Each project will be heavily researched with case studies covering history, development, partners, funding sources, process, policies, impact, impediments, and outcomes of the projects studied. The publication will be distributed to CDFA’s network of over 22,000 development finance stakeholders.

The **Council of Development Finance Agencies** is a national association dedicated to the advancement of development finance concerns and interests. CDFA is comprised of the nation’s leading and most knowledgeable members of the development finance community representing public, private and non-profit entities alike. For more information about CDFA, visit www.cdfa.net.

USDA Rural Development has a mission to improve the quality of life in rural areas by providing loans and grants for rural housing, utilities, broadband, local food systems, community facilities bio-energy and small businesses. For more information about USDA Rural Development, visit www.rurdev.usda.gov.

CDFA: Advancing Development Finance Knowledge, Networks & Innovation
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