



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development

South Dakota State University
Extension

Stronger Economies Together (SET)

South Dakota Application Fact Sheet

Purpose: Help rural communities/counties to work together as a regional team in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint that builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of their region.

What does S.E.T. Provide for you?

- Training & guidance
- Technical assistance (12 mos. beyond training)
- Peer to peer connections
- Tailored data for your region
- Planning tools

Goals for the training are:

- (1) Guide the formation of strong, inclusive and effective teams;
- (2) Help teams discover the economic assets and strengths of their region;
- (3) Build strong working ties between USDA RD and Extension Service staff; and
- (4) Promote the development of a high quality, viable economic development blueprint for the region.

Expectations of Regional Teams:

- Recognition that regional strategies represent a key part of the overall economic development blueprint for the region's small communities, cities, and counties;
- Openness to exploring economic activities that focus on strengthening existing or emerging economic clusters in the region;
- Commitment to gathering inputs and insights from a diversity of institutions and people when determining the region's goals and plans;
- Willingness to take a fresh look at where the region is, where it wants to go and the best way to get there;
- Commitment to devoting the time and energy needed to actively participate and work through all SET training materials as a regional team. (9 modules over a year time span)

The Rural Requirement:

- Each region must encompass three or more counties, and the population and/or geographic area of the region must either be (1) at least 51% rural in population OR (2) 75% of the region's land area must be located in rural areas of that region. While a region may cross state boundaries (something we encourage if it makes sense for your region), the counties that make up that multi-state region must meet the rural requirement as well.

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

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Major Benefits to Successful Applicants:

- Valuable training on the core building blocks for developing and launching a regional economic development plan.
- In-depth data tailored to the region, information that helps delineate the critical drivers of your economy (including the presence or emergence of regional clusters).
- Tools that uncover local assets and resources that can be tapped to advance your region's economic strategies and actions.
- Coaching and a limited amount of technical assistance (up to 40 hours over a period of one year after completion of the SET training program) from Extension educators, USDA RD state staff, and the Regional Rural Development Centers to guide the implementation of your regional goals and strategies .
- Option to apply for a "special assistance grant" that can be used to support more advanced regional data analyses or secure services from individuals with specific expertise needed by your team to press forward with its regional goal(s).
- Opportunity to share information and gather ideas/insights from other regions across the nation involved in the SET program.

Contact for additional information and an application:

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Applications are due electronically no later than **May 4, 2012** (by 11:59 p.m. CST). Please submit your application to: Christine Sorensen at christine.sorensen@sd.usda.gov

Website Link for Application/Flyer and additional information:

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/set/phase3.html>

