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**Rutherford County  
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# Press Release

## **Golden LEAF Seeks Rutherford Projects to Fund**

**Rutherfordton, NC, July 15, 2021:** Through its Community Based Grants Initiative (CBGI), the Golden LEAF Foundation seeks to provide assistance for projects in the Western Prosperity Zone of North Carolina, which includes Rutherford County, that support the building blocks of economic development. The Foundation seeks to fund those programs and initiatives that most closely align with its mission and priorities. Governmental entities and 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt organizations that serve the people of North Carolina are eligible to apply.

The FY 2022-2026 Golden LEAF strategic priorities include:

- To increase job creation and economic investment in rural, economically distressed, and tobacco-dependent communities
- To improve workforce preparedness in rural, economically distressed, and tobacco-dependent communities
- To increase the value of North Carolina's agriculture industry
- To improve the competitiveness, capacity, and vitality of targeted communities
- To have, and be recognized for, excellence in organizational collaboration, innovation, and impact

Per the Golden LEAF grant requirements, only project ideas that are endorsed by the County Manager will receive consideration. Per Rutherford County Manager Steve Garrison, "Golden LEAF is committed to expending up to \$1.5 million entrusted to it for projects in Rutherford County that show the most potential for strengthening North Carolina's economy, especially in tobacco-dependent, economically distressed, and/or rural communities. Awarding these funds to Rutherford County projects will help broaden the region's leadership base, enhance community and regional collaborations, and develop strategic and innovative projects to transform our economy." The CBGI is designed to identify projects with the potential to have a significant impact. It is a focused process with grants targeted toward investments in the building blocks of economic growth. Grants are limited to projects that address job creation and economic investment, workforce preparedness, agriculture as a means of supporting economic

development, and community competitiveness, capacity, and vitality to promote economic development through critical infrastructure and employment of health care professionals.

Rutherford County governmental entities and 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt organizations interested in submitting a pre-Letter of Intent to apply can visit the following link to download forms and instructions. The deadline for submitting an application/pre-Letter of Intent is August 23, 2021.

[https://rutherfordcountync.gov/departments/county\\_manager/golden\\_leaf\\_community-based\\_grants\\_initiative.php](https://rutherfordcountync.gov/departments/county_manager/golden_leaf_community-based_grants_initiative.php)

For more information about the Golden LEAF Community Based Grants Initiative, visit <https://www.goldenleaf.org/community-based-grants-initiative/>.