

A photograph of a street in a rural town, likely in the Ozarks. The street is lined with brick buildings. On the left, there's a building with a sign that says "CO-OP" and "TEMPORARY CLOTHING CO-OPERATIVE CO-OP". Next to it is a building with a sign that says "WILSON'S Drug Store". The street is decorated with American flags. There are cars parked along the street, including a red car and a blue car. The sky is blue with some clouds. The overall scene is a vibrant, small-town atmosphere.

GRO: Growth In The Rural Ozarks Rapid Rural Transformation “In-A-Box”

January 2020

the ubiquitous rural challenge.

- lack of financial resources
- limited programming capacity
- limited active local leadership
- lacking factual understanding of local community and economics dynamics
- limited understanding economic and community development principles
- limited strategic planning capabilities
- lacking a common framework to enable civic collaboration and inspire collective impact





**further exacerbating
circumstances.**

- rapid population decline
- rapidly aging population
- shrinking economic base
- shrinking program services

the opportunity.



develop a program that is more accessible to communities with limited capacity.



provide communities access to expertise to help them better understand the local and regional opportunities.



provide communities access to highly impactful **programming, tools, templates, data, technology** that allows them to drive the most impact with their limited capacity.



provide communities access to pragmatic program leaders (who have been there and done that).



establish an intimate council of cross-community leaders to facilitate peer-learning.

the goal: rebuild an economy block by block.

Business

- Help grow local businesses.

Talent/People

- Help rebuild the local population.

Placemaking

- Improve the physical vibrancy of the community.

Community Engagement

- Create a more engaged and committed citizenry.

Direct Impact
Drive direct economic impact.

Indirect Impact
Establish the foundation and the capacity to nurture economic growth.

targeted economic/community metrics.

Business

- Number of businesses in the community
- Available industrial properties capacity
- Average household income

Talent/People

- Population size
- Population with certifications and degrees
- Local poverty rate

Placemaking

- Asset base of local foundation
- Local tax base (sales, property, bed)
- Total and average household value

Community Engagement

- Number of donations to the local fund
- Community volunteer hours
- Social media engagement score

Direct Impact
Drive direct economic impact.

Indirect Impact
Establish the foundation and the capacity to nurture economic growth.

how do we move these metrics at scale?

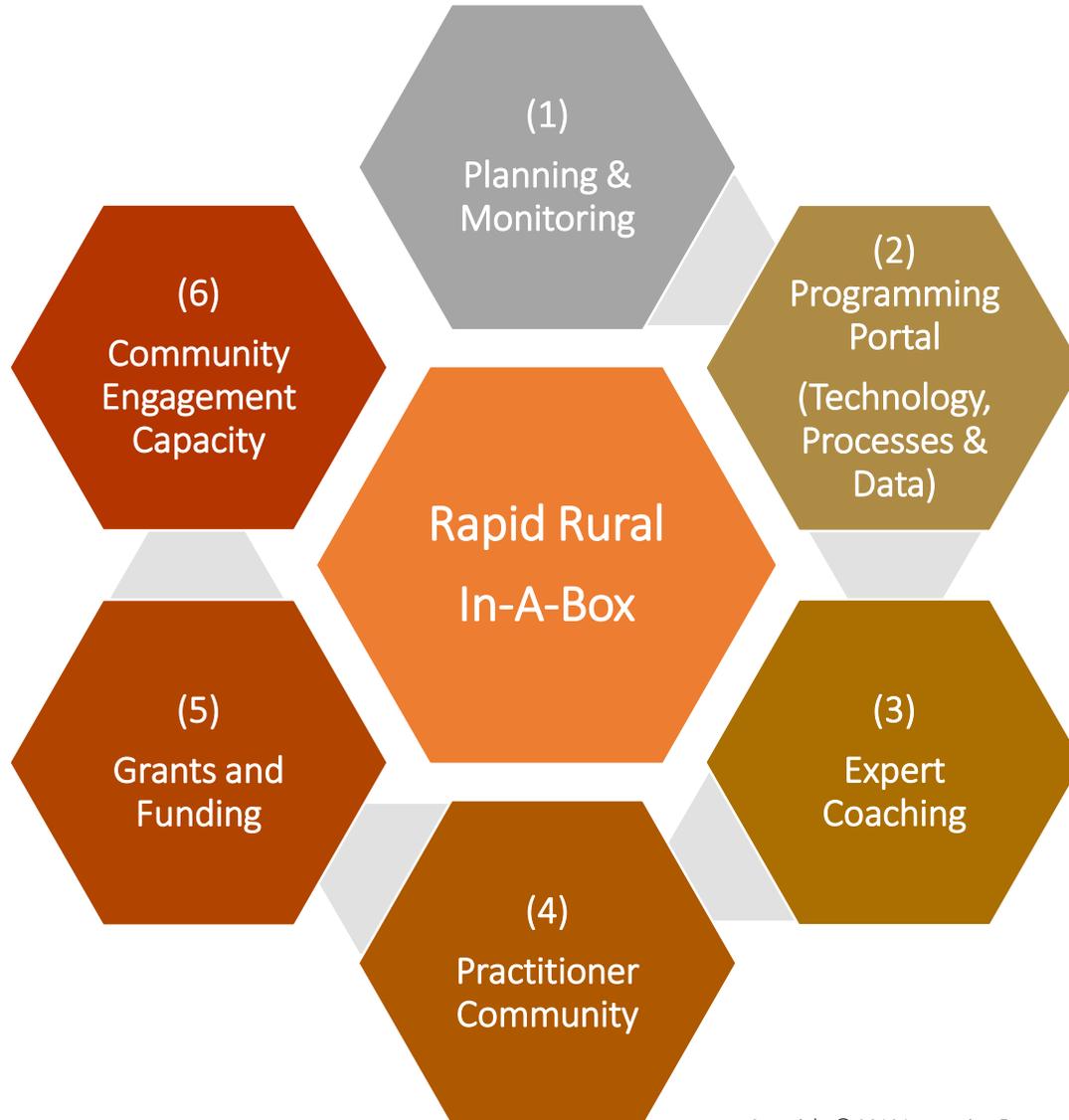
By having communities spend more time actively executing programs.

By packaging the programs in bite size units that can be rapidly implemented.

Change is difficult.
However, through a
thoughtful and
deliberate approach,
we can dramatically
ease the journey for
our rural
communities.



core program capabilities.

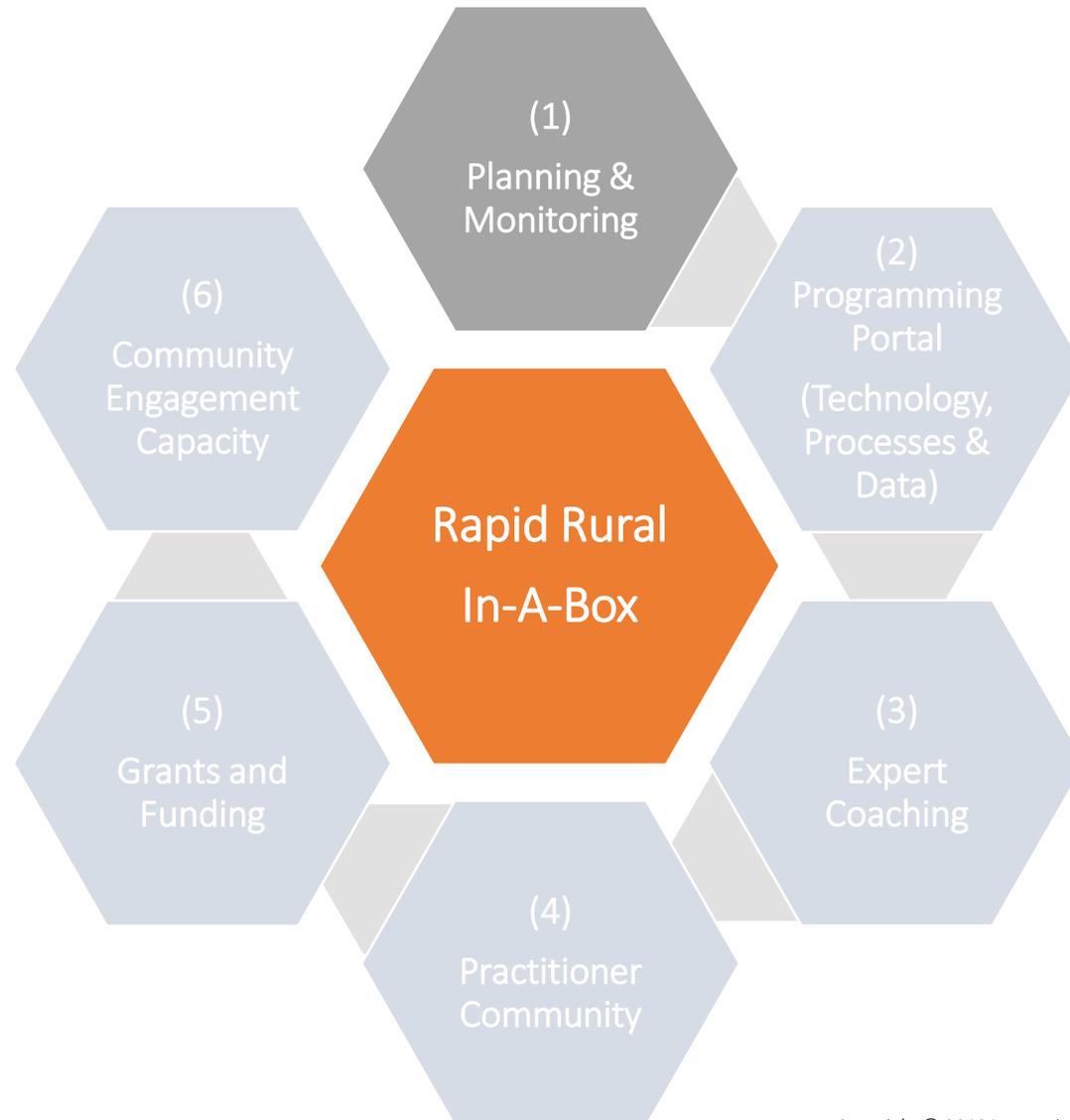


Goal: Deliver impact within 8 weeks of program launch.

6 core elements that enable a community to drive rapid impact in the community.

program details.

...minimize the planning time, drive impact within 8 weeks of start of the program...

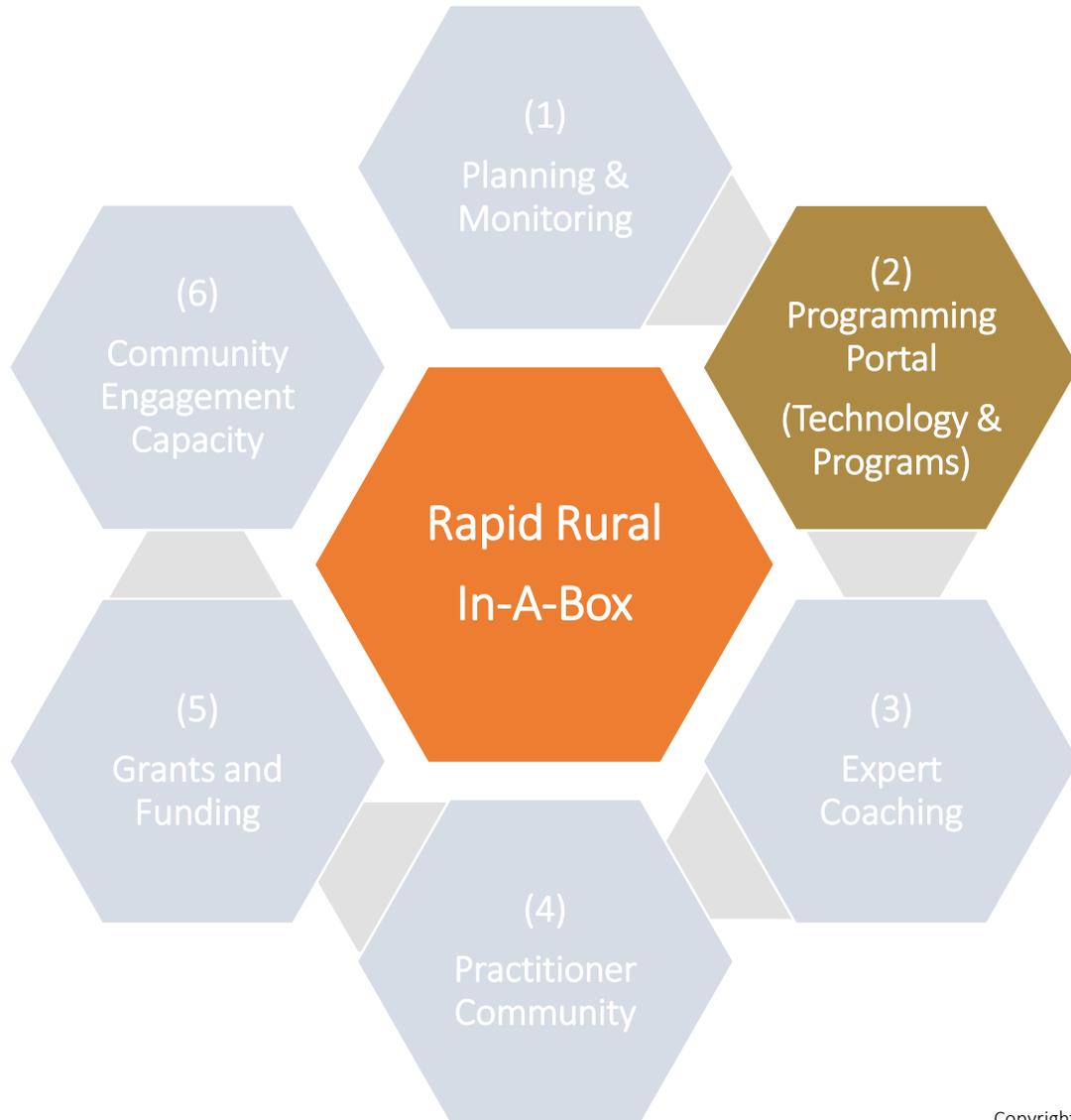


(1) Program Planning & Monitoring

- Establish a community journey
- Community assessment and graphical mapping of capabilities
 - Leadership
 - Assets
 - Planning and execution capability
- Community benchmarks
- Community planning framework
- Program monitoring toolkit
- How to videos and testimonials

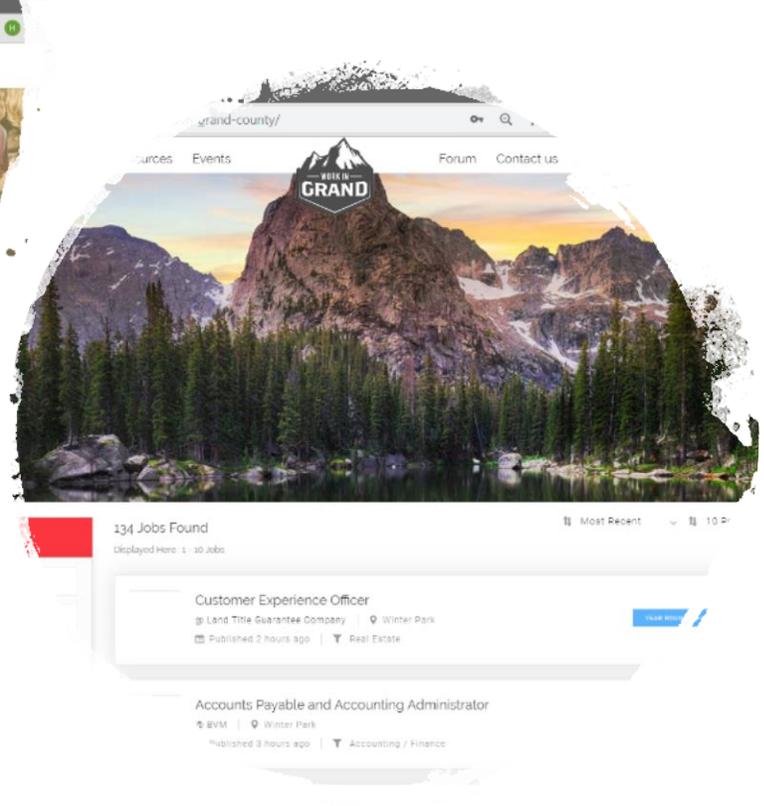
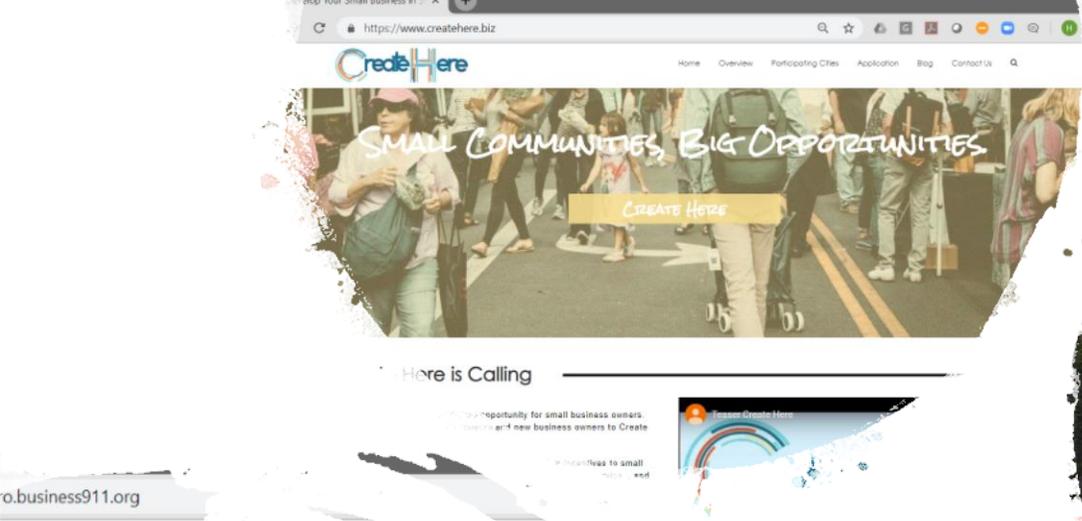
program details.

...make it easier for local staff to launch priority programs...



(2) Programming Portal

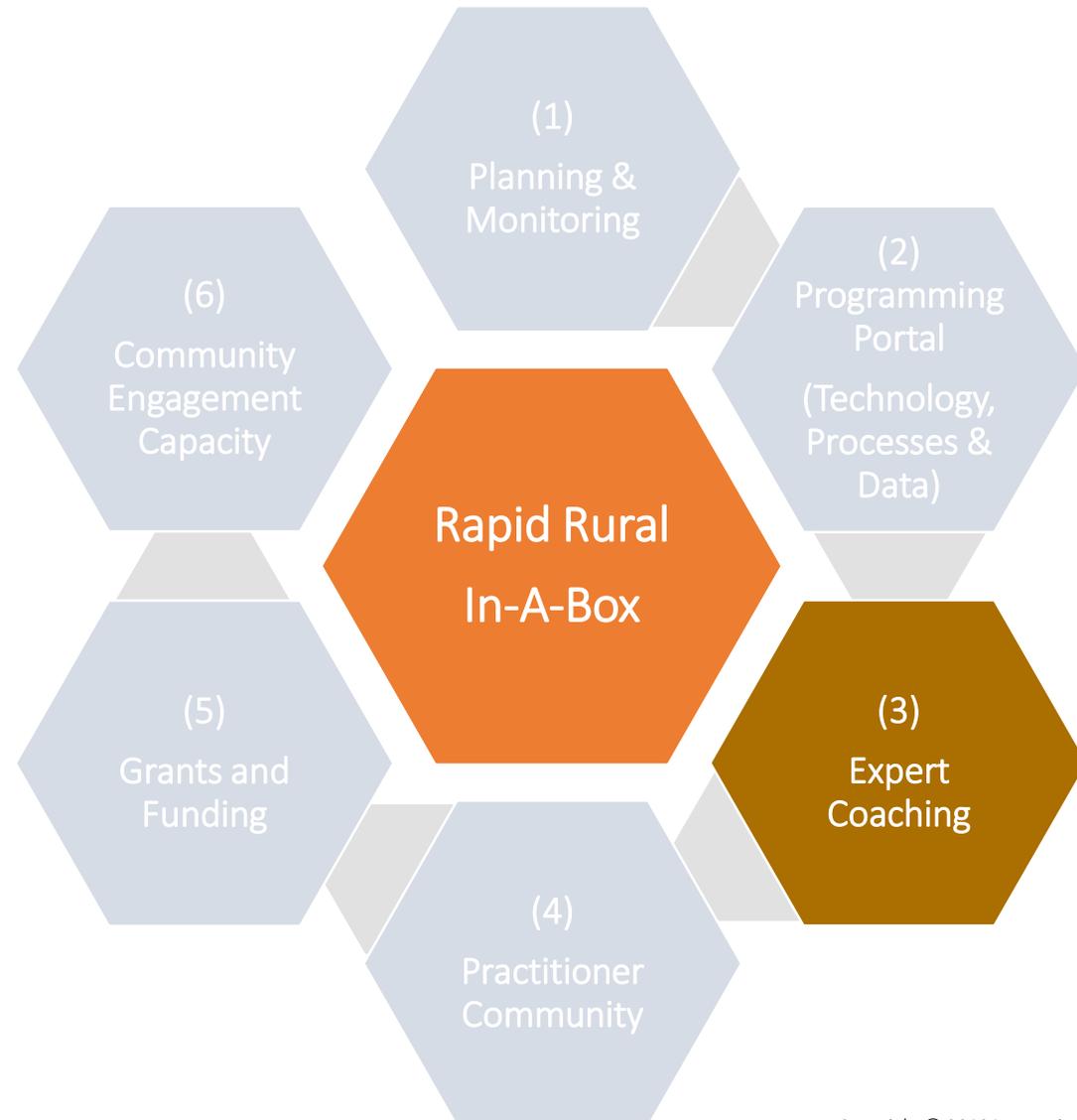
Talent Development	Business Growth	Placemaking
<p>TECHNOLOGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local & virtual jobs platform: <i>Local career opportunities</i> Micro-internship platform: <i>Experiential opportunities</i> <p>PROGRAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership and candidate school: <i>Leadership capacity development</i> Project RISE: <i>Supporting socio economically challenged citizens</i> Makerspace and youth Entrepreneurship 	<p>TECHNOLOGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business911 platform CreateHere platform Industry attraction platform <p>PROGRAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business speaker series Business zoning (enterprise zone) Business incentive structures 	<p>TECHNOLOGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GIS mapping platform <p>PROGRAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model ordinances Parade of homes Downtown/Square revitalization strategy Tool library capability



Pre-Packaged solutions that can deliver rapid impact.

program details.

...sometimes the tools aren't enough...

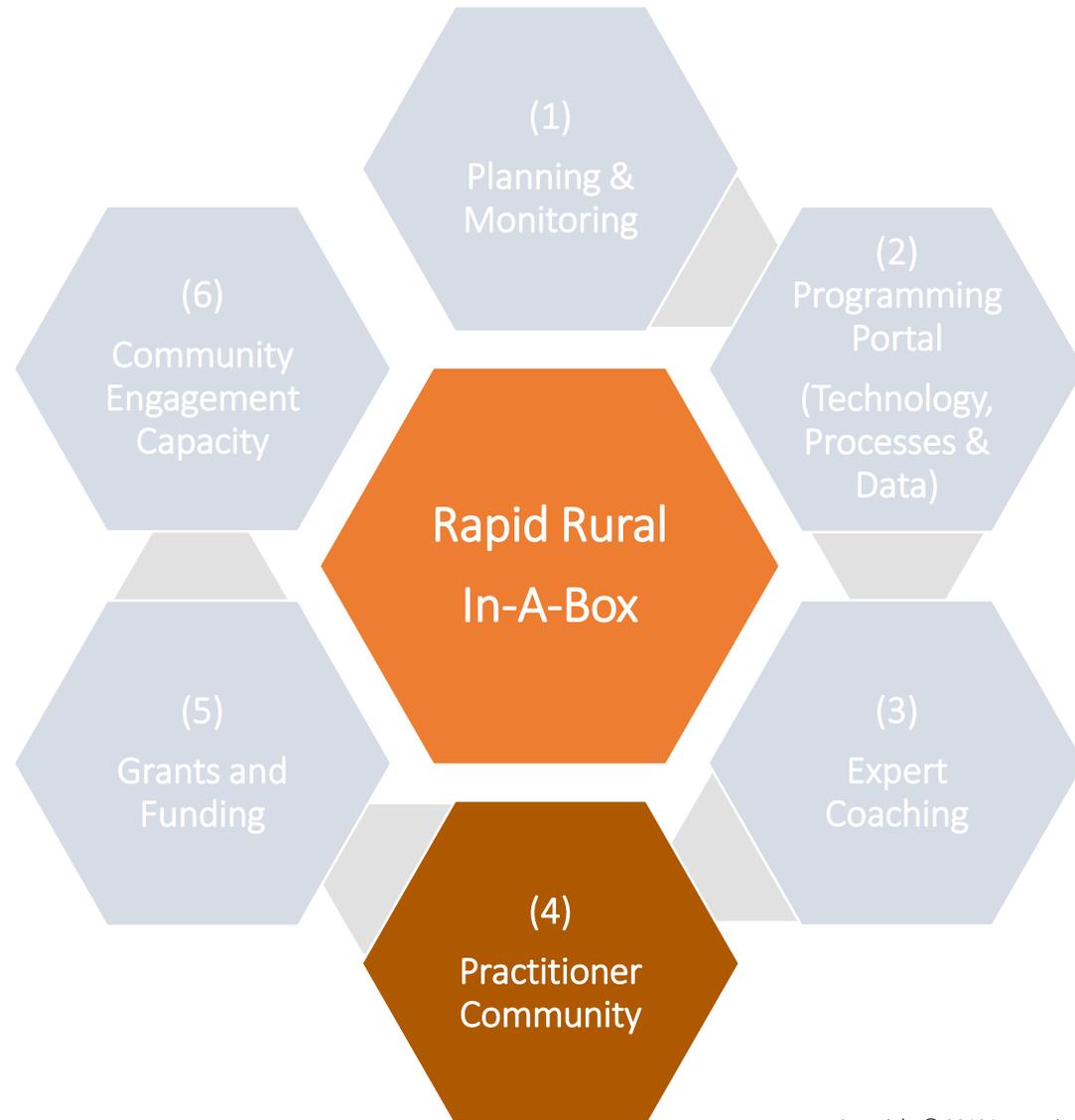


(3) Expert Coaching

- Lead efforts in community coaching and education
- Help drive community and personnel alignment
- Expert guidance
- Dedicated hours each month
- In-person and virtual support

program details.

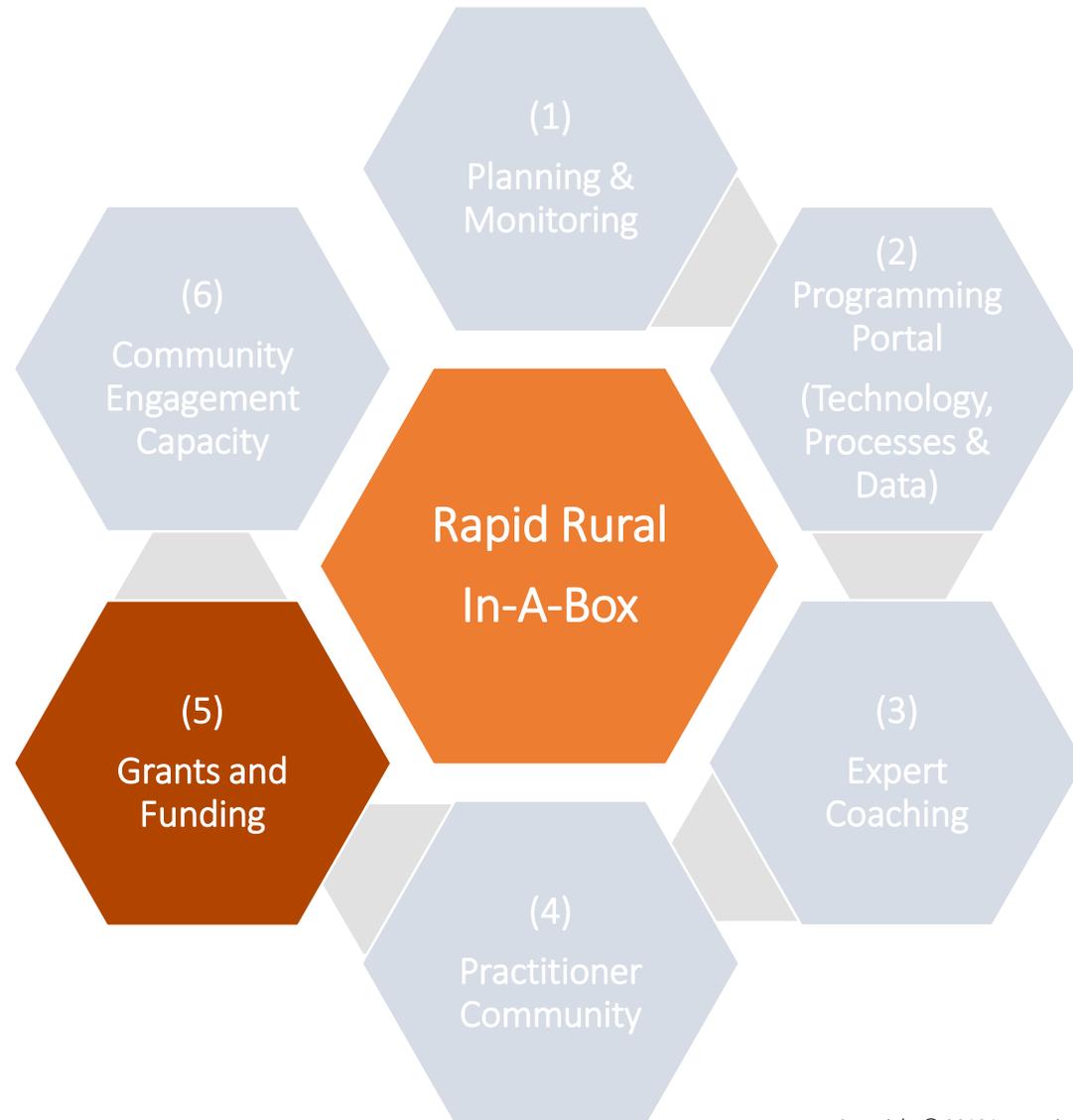
...best way to learn is by watching others...



(4) Practitioner Community

- Access to leaders who are doing the work across the country
- Bi-Annual Cross-community summits: *Spring: Annual program goal setting. Fall: Visit a new community.*
- Visits to model communities
- Bi-annual housing summit
- Participation on Rapid Rural Governance board
- Pragmatic programmatic links to regional agencies (USDA, DED, MSU,...)
- Access to discussion forums and knowledge platform

program details.



...establish capacity to write and apply for grants ...

(5) Grants and Funding

- Shortlist of critical grant opportunities
- Support to design collective community grant opportunities
- Access to 1 regional grant writing capacity each year.
- Designing program alignment for local foundation.

sample of potential grants to pursue.

[USDA- Higher Education Challenge](#)

Deadline: March 23, 2020

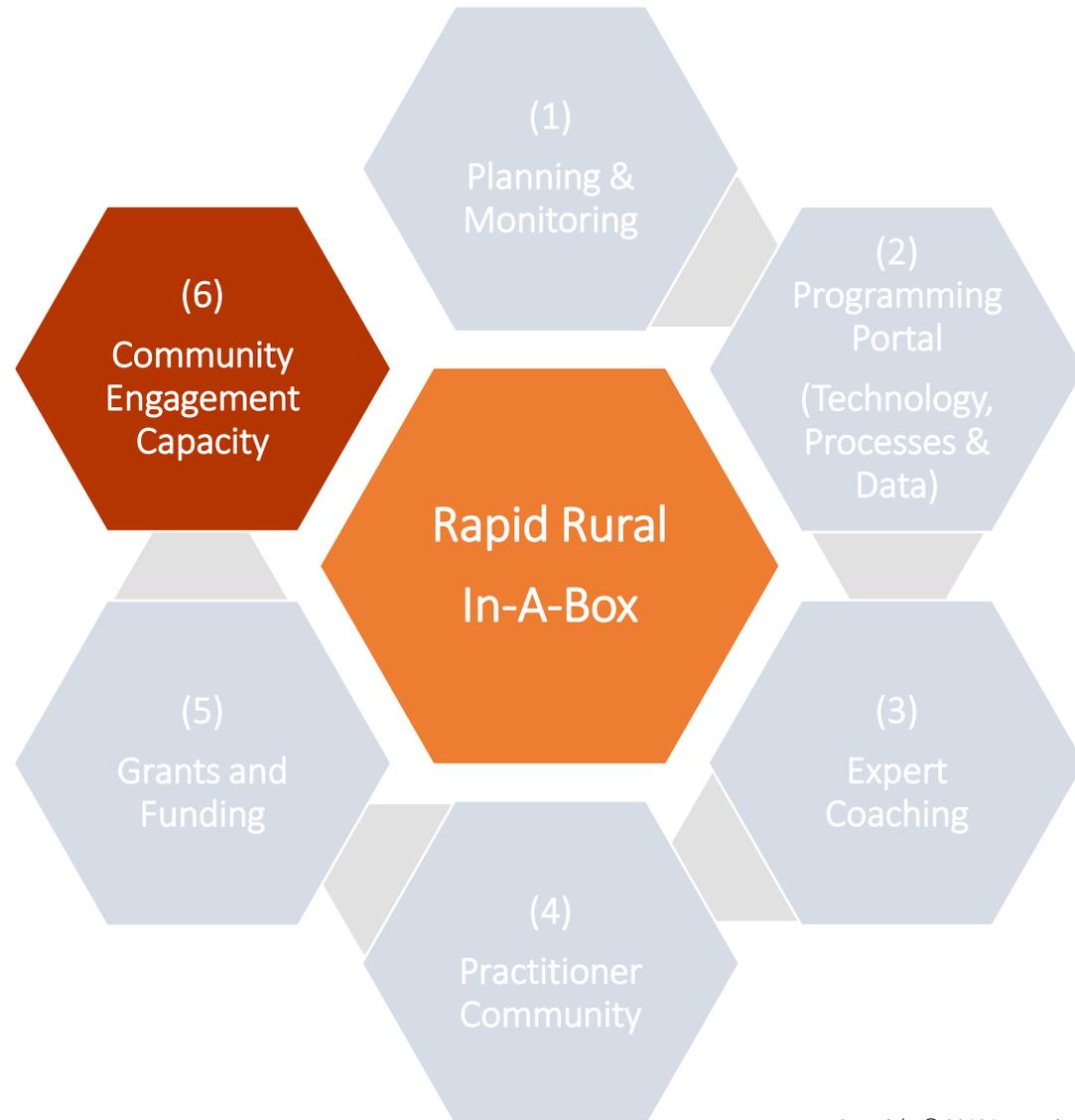
Description: Projects supported by the Higher Education Challenge Grants Program will: (1) address a state, regional, national, or international educational need; (2) involve a creative or non-traditional approach toward addressing that need that can serve as a model to others; (3) encourage and facilitate better working relationships in the university science and education community, as well as between universities and the private sector, to enhance program quality and supplement available resources; and (4) result in benefits that will likely transcend the project duration and USDA support.

*NIFA requests applications for the Higher Education Challenge (HEC) Grants Program for fiscal years (FYs) 2020 and 2021 to **enable colleges and universities to provide the quality of education necessary to produce baccalaureate or higher degree level graduates capable of strengthening the nation's food and agricultural scientific and professional workforce.***

Competitive grants to strengthen institutional capacities to respond to identified state, regional, national or international educational needs to formulate and administer programs to enhance college and university teaching in agriculture, natural resources, forestry, veterinary medicine, and family and consumer sciences., disciplines closely allied to the food and agricultural system, and rural economic, community and business development.

Award Range: \$30,000-\$750,000

program details.



...establish leadership that is dedicated to engaging the community...

(6) Community Engagement Capacity

- Dedicated resource to drive community engagement (~10 hours per cohort)
- Develop a detailed community engagement strategy.
- Support content development and management.
- Actively recruit leadership and volunteers
- Contact management

**GRO 3.0 BACKBONE:
A Central Technology Enabled Gateway:**

1. **Engage** population in community discussions
2. Establish a central portal to archive **learnings**
3. Enable **collaboration** within and across communities
4. Utilize multi-media approach to create **vivid** interactions



qualification criteria for new communities to join GRO 3.0

1. **dedicated** leadership with proven track history

Minimum of 6 individuals, who dedicate 5-10 hours per month.

2. leadership **diversity** (strong public-private partnership)

Combination of the following leaders: Chamber, Mayor, Council, School board/administrator, philanthropy, business, students, senior citizens,...

3. commitment to support local program and **contribute** to the ongoing evolution of GRO

overall program structure.

1. **Year 1: Launch:** Establish baseline, set progress targets and launch the program.
2. **Year 2: Refine:** Refine local programming structure and prepare to run program independently.
3. **Year 3 and beyond: Sustain:** Establish sustainable local programming structure.



Standardize the program deployment schedule.

	Pre-Launch	Year1, Q1	Year1, Q2	Year1, Q3	Year1, Q4	Year1, Q1	Year 2, Q1	Year 2, Q2	Year 2, Q3	Year 2, Q4
(1) Planning & Monitoring	•Current leadership, community, asset evaluation.	•Establish core program metrics and goals.				•Annual review of program metrics.				
(2a) Programming: Talent Development		•Launch leadership program. •Launch local jobs platform.		•Launch integrated student experience program.	•Launch Project RISE. Class 1	•Launch 2 nd leadership class.			•Launch Project RISE. Class 1	
(2b) Programming: Business Growth			•Launch Business911 •Launch CreateHere Contest		•Conduct Industry Attraction Day.		•Conduct CreateHere Contest.			•Conduct Industry Attraction Day.
(2c) Programming: Placemaking		•Establish rehab plan. •Rehab 3 properties.		•Refine prop. maint. ordinances. •Rehab 3 properties.		•Rehab 3 properties.		•Conduct Parade of Homes. •Rehab 3 properties.		
(3) Expert Coaching		•Monthly coaching sessions.								
(4) Practitioner Community		•Business Summit. •Quarterly GRO Meeting.	•Housing + Infrastructure Summit.	•Workforce Summit. •Quarterly GRO Meeting.	•Business Summit.	•Business Summit •Quarterly GRO Meeting.	•Housing + Infrastructure Summit.	•Workforce Summit •Quarterly GRO Meeting.	•Business Summit.	
(5) Grants and Funding					•Submit collective grant application.					•Submit collective grant application.
(6) Community Engagement	•Prepare and launch comm. Engagement.	•Launch engagement portal •Conduct community listening event.	•Annual fundraising event.			•Conduct community listening event.	•Annual fundraising event.			

measurable benefits for local funders.

- impactful local programming helps encourage **philanthropic giving**
- drive generational giving through broader **community engagement**
- drive tangible regional and **inter-community collaboration**
- foundation can help establish a more **prominent visibility** in local community

