

Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA)

What does BTA do?

In addition to supporting broadband technical assistance and training activities, BTA funding helps develop and expand broadband cooperatives.

The types of activities BTA funding supports include project planning and community engagement, financial sustainability, environmental compliance, construction planning and engineering, accessing federal resources, and data collection and reporting.



Who can apply?

- Federally recognized Tribes and Tribal entities
- State or local governments, including agencies and subdivisions, among others
- Territories or possessions of the United States
- Institutions of higher education (including 1862 Land-Grant Institutions, 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, 1994 Land-Grant Institutions, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities)
- Nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) IRS status
- Cooperatives or mutual organizations
- Corporations
- Limited Liability Companies or Limited Liability Partnerships

What is an eligible area?

For a project to be eligible to receive BTA funds, it must promote broadband expansion in a rural community.

What is a rural area?

- For the purposes of BTA, a rural area is defined as “any area not located in a city, town, or incorporated area with a population greater than 20,000, or an urbanized area next to a city or town with a population greater than 50,000 people.” Certain other exclusions apply.

- Eligible areas must be contained within a rural area or composed of multiple rural areas. You will find a mapping tool with additional eligibility information at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/mje7ssr8>.

How do we apply?

Applications must be submitted electronically through <https://www.grants.gov>.

How can funds be used?

Funds can be used to promote broadband expansion in eligible rural areas and include activities such as project planning and community engagement, operations, financial sustainability, environmental compliance, construction and engineering planning, accessing federal resources, and data collection and reporting.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- Helping recipients identify broadband resources and planning for delivering broadband service
- Identifying public and private resources to finance broadband facilities
- Preparing studies, reports, and surveys necessary to support broadband services, or to request financial assistance to develop broadband facilities
- Improving broadband facilities management and operations

How much funding is available?

Under the current funding opportunity, \$20 million is available:

- \$7.5 million is for Technical Assistance Providers. The minimum award amount is \$50,000 and the maximum award amount is \$1 million.
- \$7.5 million is for Technical Assistance Recipients. The minimum award amount is \$50,000 and the maximum award amount is \$250,000.
- \$5 million is for projects that support cooperatives. The minimum award amount is \$50,000 and the maximum award amount is \$1 million.

Where can we get help with our application?

USDA RD will host several webinars during the application window. Webinar dates and times and additional resources can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p95jdudf>. You also can contact one of our Telecommunications General Field Representatives (GFR – a list is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xtpfj>.) Or, you can submit your questions directly to the BTA staff by completing the form available at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/ysr6kann>.

Can a non-Tribal entity receive funding to serve Tribal Lands?

A Tribal Government Resolution of Consent must be provided if a non-tribal applicant is proposing to assist a tribal community (or communities). Any applicant that fails to provide the Tribal Government Resolution of Consent will not be considered for funding.

How do we know if our project will serve targeted communities?

You can view targeted communities on our mapping tool located at <https://tinyurl.com/2p95jdudf>. A Geographic Information System (GIS) layer of the areas noted below are considered targeted communities for this funding opportunity announcement.

- Tribes and Tribal entities
- Colonia areas
- Persistent poverty counties
- Distressed energy communities

How does BTA funding work?

BTA is funded through a cooperative agreement and requires substantial involvement from the awarding agency. Proposed BTA projects must support the active participation and involvement of USDA Rural Development staff.

Are matching funds required?

BTA does not have a cost share or matching requirement.

What governs BTA?

The Rural eConnectivity Program is associated with USDA Rural Development's ReConnect Program (information is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xzW4Y>). The current BTA funding opportunity uses technical assistance funds appropriated under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA – Public Law 117-58 – available at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/5b2akk4t>).

For more information:

For more information, please visit the BTA website at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p95jdudf> or use the Contact Us link available at <https://tinyurl.com/ysr6kann>.

NOTE: Because information changes, always consult official BTA instructions or contact your local General Field Representative for help. A list is available at this link: <https://go.usa.gov/xtpfj>. You can also use the Contact Us link available at <https://tinyurl.com/ysr6kann>.

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