Interagency Session

USDA RUS ReConnect Program

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Rural Development

Agenda

- Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Presentation

- Economic Development Administration (EDA) Presentation

- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Presentation

- Q&A Session

FCC Broadband Update

Kirk S. Burgee

Deputy Director
Rural Broadband
Auctions Task Force

Federal Communications Commission

January 20, 2022

Connect America Phase II Auction (Auction 903)

- **Reverse auction** of support for deployment and operation of fixed voice and broadband capable networks
- Providers could propose to use multiple fixed technologies to offer service from **10 Mbps to 1 Gbps**
- Bidding closed on August 21, 2018
  - Approximately $1.5 billion in support awarded to provide service to close to 700,000 locations in 45 states
- Support authorized as of May 14, 2020:
  - **$1.44 billion for 631,961 locations in 45 states**
- Six-year deployment period **– 40% milestone: Dec. 31, 2022**
- More info: https://www.fcc.gov/auction/903

Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (Auction 904)

- Reverse auction of support for deployment and operation of fixed voice and broadband capable networks
- Funding for fixed voice and broadband service from **25 Mbps to 1 Gbps**
- Bidding closed **November 24, 2020 - $9.2 billion** in support awarded to over 5.2 million homes and small businesses in **49 states** and one territory (CNMI)
- FCC took steps to remove some areas post-auction, including sending letters to winning bidders encouraging additional due diligence on areas to be served
- FCC releasing funding announcements monthly
- **As of January 20, 2022, $2.78 billion announced for 284 carriers in 45 states, almost all for fiber gigabit service**
- Pending long form applications under active review; additional awards upcoming
- Deployment required to 100% of actual locations within awarded census block
- More info, including current award data & shapefiles: https://www.fcc.gov/auction/904

Affordable Connectivity Program

ACP is a $14.2 billion federal initiative that offers qualifying households discounts on their internet service bills and an opportunity to receive a discount on devices from participating providers

- Successor to the **Emergency Broadband Benefit Program**

- Provides a discount of **up to $30 per month** toward i**nternet service** for eligible households and **up to $75 per month** for households on qualifying Tribal lands

- Eligible households can also receive a **one-time discount** of up to $100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if they contribute more than $10 and less than $50 toward the purchase price

- Limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household

Affordable Connectivity Program

Who is Eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program?

A household is eligible if a member of the household meets at least *one* of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is **at or below 200%** of the f**ederal poverty guidelines**; or

- Participates in certain **assistance programs**, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;

- Participates in **Tribal specific programs**, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations;

- Is approved to receive benefits under the **free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program**, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision in the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, or 2021-2022 school year;

- Received a **Federal Pell Grant** during the current award year; or

- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating **provider's existing low-income program**.

Affordable Connectivity Program

Additional Affordable Connectivity Program Provisions

- Participating providers required to allow consumers to apply the benefit to a much greater array of broadband plans;

- Protections against the use of credit checks or existing debt to prohibit enrollment in the program;

- Prohibition on certain inappropriate sales agent practices such as upselling or downselling; and

- Measures to reduce the likelihood of bill shock, and to disallow restrictions on consumers who want to switch providers or even just broadband service offerings.

Learn more at: www.fcc.gov/ACP

Enroll: https://ACPbenefit.org/ or **(833) 511-0311**

Questions?

EDA Funding Programs

USDA Rural Reconnect Workshop
January 20, 2022
February 10, 2022

EDA Overview

Mission

EDA's leads the federal economic development agenda by promoting **innovation and competitiveness**, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.

Grants

EDA makes grants that leverage existing regional assets to support implementation of **economic development strategies** for businesses to start and grow.

Integration

EDA leads the integration of economic development on all governmental levels and philanthropy to achieve increased viability **and resiliency** for communities.

EDA
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

EDA's Investment Priorities

- Equity
- Recovery & Resilience
- Workforce Development
- Manufacturing
- Technology-Based Economic Development
- Environmentally-Sustainable Development
- Exports & Foreign Direct Investment

✓ Promote Innovation and Competitiveness

✓ Leverage existing regional assets

✓ Foster job creation

✓ Attract Private Investment

✓ Advance new ideas and creative approaches to economic prosperity in distressed communities

https://eda.gov/about/investment-priorities/

EDA
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Eligible Applicants / Recipients

- District Organization of an EDA-designated Economic Development District (EDD);
- Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes;
- State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State,
- Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State

Applicants must show alignment with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) or an **equivalent** plan.
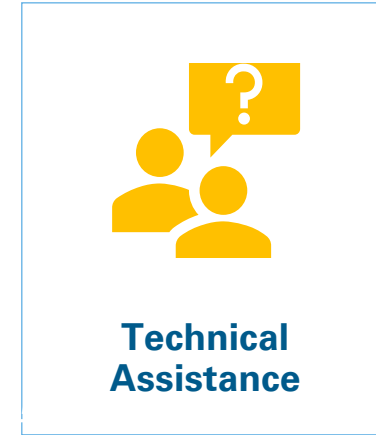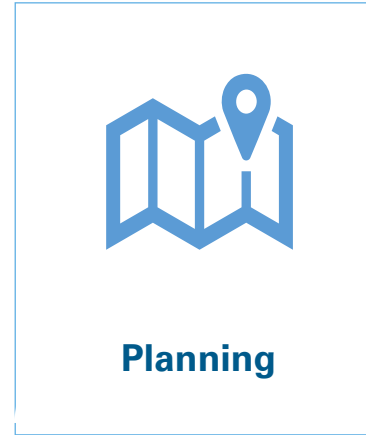
EDA is <u>not</u> authorized to provide direct financial assistance to individuals, small businesses, or for-profit entities.

See EDA Notice of Funding Opportunity for full details:
https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/

EDA
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

EDA's Program Portfolio

American Rescue Plan funds are EAA funds

Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA)

Public Works

Planning

Technical Assistance

Research and Evaluation

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF)

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Revolving Loan Funds (RLF)
Part of EAA

https://eda.gov/programs/eda-programs/

EDA
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NOFOs		Description	Total EDA American Rescue Plan funding: $3B
1	**Statewide Planning, Research, & Networks** $90M	Invest in economic plans, research to assess the effectiveness of EDA's programs, and support for stakeholder communities around key EDA initiatives	
2	**Build Back Better Regional Challenge** $1B	Transform 20-30 economically distressed regions through substantial investment through groups of 3-8 projects, totaling ~$25-75M per region; open to proposals up to $100M	
3	**Travel, Tourism, & Outdoor Recreation** $750M	Accelerate communities impacted by COVID-related travel and tourism decline through state grants ($510M) and competitive grants ($240M)	
4	**Economic Adjustment Assistance** $500M	Invest in infrastructure, technical assistance, planning, and revolving loan programs through competitive grants available to every community	
5	**Indigenous Communities** $100M	Additional Economic Adjustment Assistance funds to specifically support Indigenous communities	
6	**Good Jobs Challenge** $500M	Establish or strengthen regional systems to train workers with in-demand skills through employer-driven training, supporting participants with wrap-around services and employer commitments to hire	

www.eda.gov/arpa

Selected EDA Awards Supporting Broadband (2021)

Strategy Grants for Economic Diversification

- $613,750 to the Missouri Association of Council of Governments, to develop broadband feasibility plans for regional clusters and broadband planning technical assistance.

- $120,000, to Idaho County, Grangeville/Idaho County, ID, to support a rural broadband feasibility study.

- $500,000, to New North, Inc., Green Bay/Brown County, WI to conduct a Broadband Access Study and Expansion Plan for 18 counties in northeast WI.

- $255,200, to Lincoln County, OR, to support a Broadband Action Team that will create a rural broadband feasibility study of a 4-county region.

Recovery and Resilience for Disaster Impacted Areas, including COVID-19 Economic Recovery

- $3.2M to the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, CO, to support construction of a middle mile fiber network to serve the business corridor and support access to telemedicine.

- $3.4M to the Northeast Service Cooperative of Mount Iron, MN to construct more than 100 miles of middle-mile broadband fiber in six counties in Northeast Minnesota.
- $2M to Little River County, AR, to construct fiber optic cable lines to bring broadband infrastructure to rural communities heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- $700,000, to support the Governor's Broadband for Everyone in Louisiana (BEL) Commission, with establishing a Louisiana Broadband Strategy.

Critical Infrastructure for Entrepreneurship, Business and Workforce Development

- $500,000, to Medina County, TX, to fund infrastructure improvements to install fiber optic cable to provide high-speed internet access.

- $960,000 to support the Garrett County MD Board of Commissioners for design and installation of gigabit broadband fiber connecting farms and rural businesses to business grade broadband services.

- $2M Des Moines University Osteopathic Medicine Center (IA) to purchase equipment for the university's telehealth training center.

- $2.6M Public Works grant, to the Chibardun Telephone Cooperative WI, to install more than 70 miles of broadband fiber-optic cable.

https://eda.gov/grants/

Economic Development Integration (EDI) and Broadband

EDA collaboration with other federal agencies can leverage resources supporting broadband projects and efforts:

- **Joint Outreach and Cross Agency Referrals**
- **Federal Information and Resource Exchanges (FIREs)**
- **Regional Economic Diversification Summits (REDS)**
- **Engage with philanthropic organizations**
- **Regional Integrators available to assist with federal program coordination and resource alignment**

https://www.eda.gov/integration/

Seneca Nation of Indians, NY

SENECA NATION OF INDIANS
Locational Map of the Territories

EDA awarded the Seneca Nation $290,000 in FY19 to develop a broadband fiber deployment strategy, feasibility study, and engineering plans
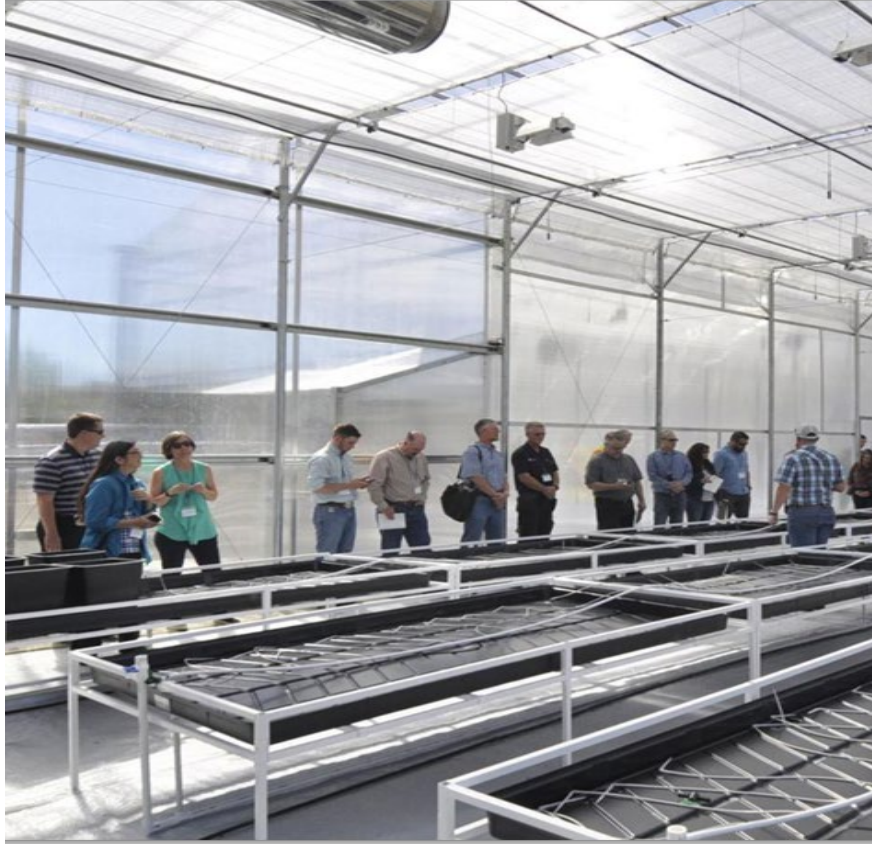
Outcomes

- Data Center Ready

- Student and professional computer centers

- Enhanced on-line education opportunities

Outputs & Integration Opportunities

- *Expand*: **USDA ReConnect Program**, supporting Seneca Telecommunications, LLC to deploy a fiber-to-the-premise (FTTP) broadband network

- *Optimize*: **CDFI**, Seneca Nation of Indians Economic Development Company (SNIEDC), recognized by Department of Treasury in 2018.

- *Leverage*: **BIA Indian Energy & Economic Development** programing for Seneca Nation & the Salamanca Rail Museum, Enhancing Rail to Trail Model
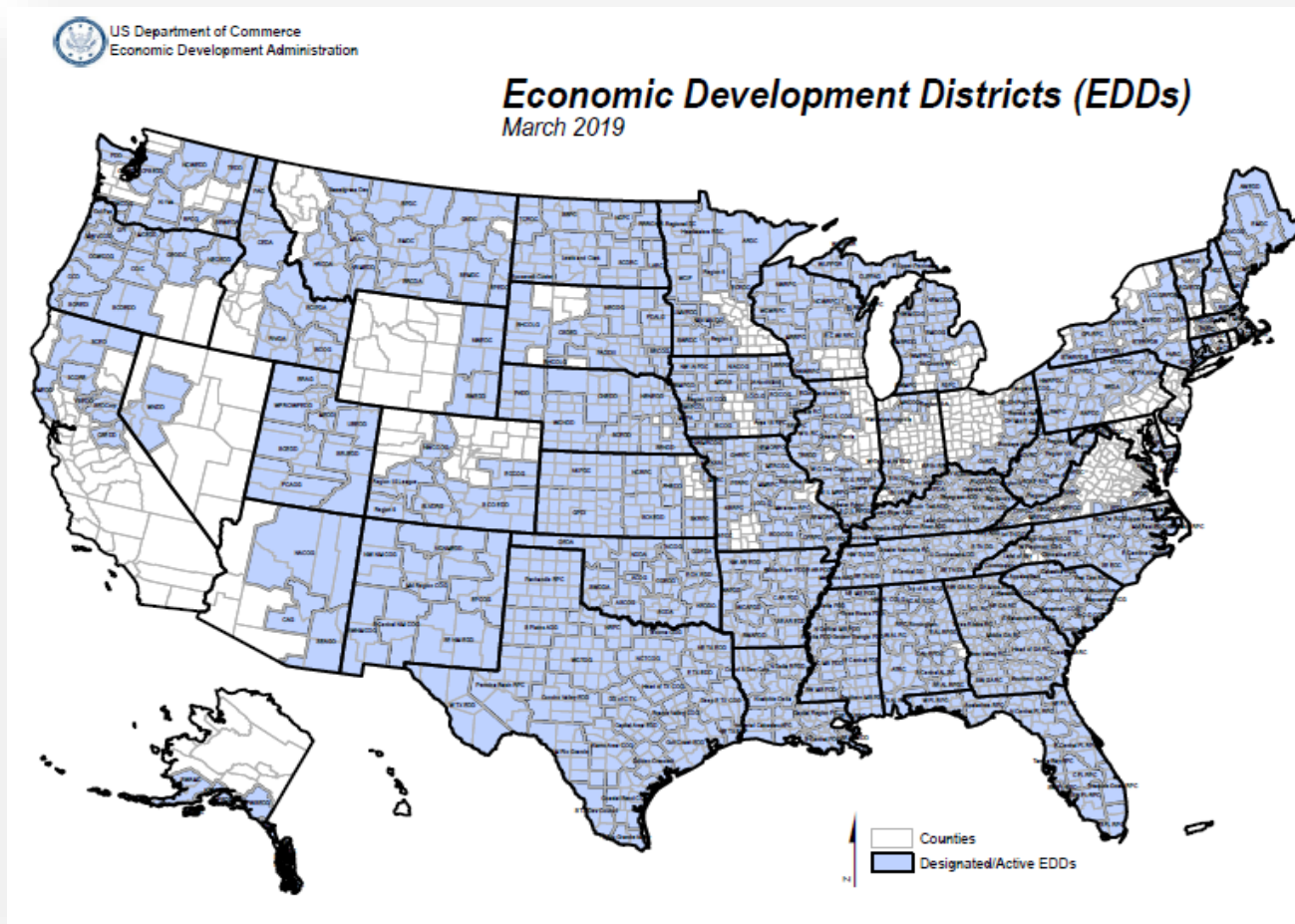
Integration in Action: John Day, OR

- City of John Day, Oregon received EDA grant to develop a rural investment strategy CEDS for their Innovation Gateway project to spur local and regional investments and development.
- EDA Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS) brought together multiple federal agency partners (USDA, EDA, EPA, more).
- Successful applications for USDA RD ReConnect $6 million to support regional broadband connectivity as well as other federal, state and private investments

EDA
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

EDA Network of Regional Development Partners

US Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration

Economic Development Districts (EDDs)
March 2019

Counties
Designated/Active EDDs

University Centers (UCs)

- 40+ Institutions of higher education

- Provide data, research and technical assistance to the local economic development community

Economic Development Districts (EDDs)

- 390+ Multi-jurisdictional entities that serve regional geographies

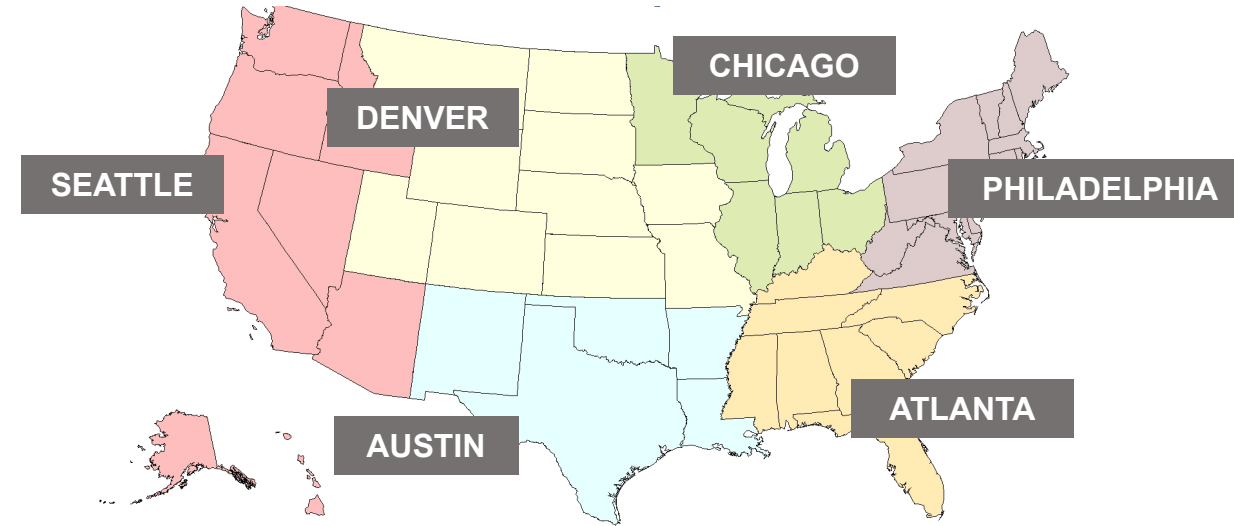- Leaders of locally-based, regionally driven Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning processes

https://eda.gov/resources/directory/

Resources

- **Contact the EDA Economic Development Representative** for your state before applying: **https://eda.gov/contact/**

- **Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)** and Eligibility Requirements: https://eda.gov/funding-opportunities/

- **Find your Economic Development District** for planning support and technical assistance: https://eda.gov/resources/directory/

- **Visit** www.eda.gov/arpa to learn more about EDA's American Rescue Plan programs.

EDA Regional Offices
https://eda.gov/contact/

SEATTLE
DENVER
CHICAGO
PHILADELPHIA
AUSTIN
ATLANTA

Seattle:
American Samoa
Guam
Federated States of Micronesia
Palau
Marshall Islands
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Philadelphia:
Puerto Rico
U.S. Virgin Islands

EDA
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Thank you!

Nancy Gilbert, Acting Director

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US Economic Development Administration

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www.eda.gov/edi

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IIJA BROADBAND PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS & DEPLOYMENT (BEAD) PROGRAM

ENABLING MIDDLE MILE BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

Karen Hanson

Team Lead, Interagency Coordination

Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth

NTIA

INFRASTRUCTURE ACT* CREATES ~$65B IN BROADBAND FUNDING

NTIA will administer ~$48B of this new funding

BEAD
$42.45B

Title I - Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program

Formula-based grant program for U.S. states and territories. BEAD aims to close the access gap for unserved & underserved areas of the country.

DIGITAL EQUITY
$2.75B

Title III – Digital Equity Act

Three programs, established for planning & implementation of programs that promote digital equity, support digital inclusion activities, and build capacity related to the adoption of broadband.

TRIBAL
$2.00B

Title II - Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments

Furthers current Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program by investing an additional $2B to fund broadband adoption and infrastructure projects.

MIDDLE MILE
$1.00B

Title IV - Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure

Provides funding to extend middle mile capacity to reduce cost of serving unserved and underserved areas and enhance network resilience.

FCC to administer ~$14B
$14.2B
For Affordable Connectivity Program, which will replace the EBB program

USDA to administer $2B
$2.0B
Via the Rural Utilities Service

Private Activity Bonds $600M
$600M
Authorizes State/local gov'ts to use private activity bonds for rural broadband

* Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Division F, Pub. L. 117-58 (Nov. 15, 2021)
Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides.

NTIA

BEAD (I/II) | THE "BEAD" PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE ~$42B FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW

Official name: Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment Program

Funding pool: $42.45B

Type of program: State and Territory formula program

Program objective: to close the availability gap, as Congress finds that "access to affordable, reliable, high-speed broadband is essential to full participation in modern life in the United States."

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

1. Unserved locations
   No access to 25/3 Mbps

2. Underserved locations
   No access to 100/20 Mbps

3. Community anchor institutions
   Without gigabit connections

Eligible entity must also prioritize
- Persistent poverty / high-poverty areas
- Speed of proposed network
- Build time
- Demonstrated record on compliance with federal labor & employment laws

OTHER KEY FEATURES

Quality requirements
Specific network requirements are included e.g., speeds of at least 100/20 Mbps

Matching requirement
Eligible entities must ensure that they or a subgrantee provide at least 25% match *(unless waiver granted)*

Low-cost plan requirement
Required to offer a low-cost plan to eligible subscribers *(to be determined by NTIA)*

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

NTIA

BEAD (II/II) | STATES AND U.S. TERRITORIES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING, WITH LEGISLATION SPECIFYING ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

"Eligible entity" for this program refers to **all 50 U.S. States and U.S. Territories** (including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands)

*If an eligible entity fails to submit, or fails to gain approval for, a 'covered application' (LOI, initial proposal or final proposal) by the relevant deadline, a **political subdivision, or consortium of political subdivisions** of the entity, may submit a covered application*

ELIGIBLE COSTS & ACTIVITIES

Planning / pre-deployment funds (no more than 5% of min. allocation)
- Research & data collection
- Budget development
- Publications, outreach & communication support
- Provision of technical assistance
- Employee training for eligible entity or political subdivision staff
- Establishing capacity in the eligible entity's office responsible for program

Grant / deployment funds
- Unserved & underserved area service projects
- Connecting eligible community anchor institutions
- Data collection, broadband mapping & planning
- Broadband adoption (incl. affordable device provision)
- Installing internet/Wi-Fi infrastructure (or providing reduced cost broadband) in multi-family residential building

Eligible entities can use no more than 2% for administrative purposes

NTIA

ENABLING MIDDLE MILE BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

MIDDLE MILE (I/II) | $1 BILLION ALLOCATED TO MIDDLE MILE GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT EXPANSION OF NETWORKS

OVERVIEW

Official name: Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure

Funding pool: $1.00B

Type of program: Direct competitive grant on technology-neutral basis

Program objective: "Encourage the expansion and extension of middle mile infrastructure to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas … and to promote broadband connection resiliency"

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

1 For eligible entities meeting **at least two of five conditions:**
- ❑ Adopt "fiscally sustainable middle mile strategies"
- ❑ Commit to offering non-discriminatory interconnect
- ❑ Identify specific, documented and sustainable demand for middle mile interconnect
- ❑ Identify conditions/resources to speed up project
- ❑ Demonstrate benefits to national security interests

2 **Eligible entities must also:**
- Agree to prioritize connecting to unserved areas, connecting to non-contiguous trust lands, or offering wholesale carrier-neutral service at reasonable rate
- Offer interconnection "in perpetuity … on reasonable rates and terms"

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

NTIA

MIDDLE MILE (II/II) | LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE IS BROAD WITH REGARDS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES AND ELIGIBLE USES

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Can be one or a partnership of multiple:
- State or its political subdivisions
- Tribal government
- Tech company
- Electric utility, utility cooperative or public utility district
- Telecom company or cooperative,
- Nonprofit foundation, corporation, institution, or association
- Regional planning counsel
- Native entity
- Economic development authority

ELIGIBLE COSTS & ACTIVITIES

Middle mile grants can be used for "**the construction, improvement, or acquisition of middle mile infrastructure**"

Middle mile infrastructure broadly means "*any broadband infrastructure* that does not connect directly to an end-user location, including an anchor institution," **and includes**:
- Leased dark fiber, interoffice transport, backhaul, carrier-neutral internet exchange facilities, carrier-neutral submarine cable landing stations, undersea cables, transport connectivity to data centers, special access transport, and other similar services
- Wired or private wireless broadband infrastructure, including microwave capacity, radio tower access, and other services or infrastructure for a private wireless network, e.g., towers, fiber, and microwave links

NTIA

TRIBAL CONNECTIVITY TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

TRIBAL (I/II) | TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS AND NEW FUNDING WILL STRENGTHEN CURRENT TRIBAL CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Official name: Tribal Broadband Connectivity Technical Amendments

Funding pool: $2.00B

Type of program: Grants to eligible entities with approved applications

Program objective: providing new funds and extending expenditure deadlines for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (established by Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Div. N, Tit. IX, Sec. 905(c))

KEY AMENDMENTS TO PRIOR PROGRAM

1. Adding $2 billion for NTIA to distribute to eligible entities, including to fund previously-proposed programs

2. Relaxing time requirements of original program—after receipt of funding, eligible entities now have up to
   - 6 months to submit applications
   - 18 months to commit the funds to projects
   - 4 years to fully expend the grant funds

3. Allowing infrastructure grantees to expend up to 2.5% total project cost for related planning, feasibility and sustainability studies

4. Preserving unused allocated funds for other Tribal broadband projects instead of reverting back to the Treasury

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

NTIA

TRIBAL (II/II) | NO NEW RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN IMPOSED ON ELIGIBLE ENTITIES OR USES

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

- A Tribal Government
- A Tribal College or University
- The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, including Native Hawaiian Education Programs
- A Tribal organization
- A Native Corporation

ELIGIBLE USES

As outlined in prior legislation
- Broadband infrastructure deployment, including support for the establishment of carrier-neutral submarine cable landing stations
- Affordable broadband programs including
  - Providing free or reduced cost broadband service
  - Preventing disconnection of existing broadband service
- Distance learning
- Telehealth
- Digital inclusion efforts
- Broadband adoption activities

Eligible entities can use no more than 2% of funds for administrative purposes

PRIORITY

Eligible entities shall prioritize projects that deploy broadband infrastructure to **unserved households**

DIGITAL EQUITY PROGRAMS

OVERVIEW

Official name: Title III – The Digital Equity Act

Funding pool: $2.75B

Programs' objective: support the closure of the digital divide & promote equity and digital inclusion, so that "individuals and communities have the information technology capacity that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States."

PROGRAM/S PRIORITIES

> **Veterans**

> Individuals living in households **earning at or below 150% of the poverty line**

> **Aging** individuals

> **Incarcerated** individuals

> Individuals with **disabilities**

> Individuals with a **language barrier**

> Individuals who are members of a **racial or ethnic minority group**

> Individuals who primarily reside in **a rural area**

PROGRAMS CREATED

State program

State Planning Grant Program ($60M)

State Capacity Grant Program ($1.44B)

Comp. program

Competitive Grant Program ($1.25B)

Created once state implementation grants begin being awarded

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

DIGITAL EQUITY (II/IV) | THE FIRST PROGRAM CREATES $60M FOR STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING

State Planning Grant Program

OVERVIEW

Official name: State Digital Equity Planning Grants

Funding pool: $60M

Type of program: State and Territory formula program

Programs' objective: Ensure States have the capacity & appropriate plans to achieve digital equity & support digital inclusion

ELIGIBILITY

"Eligible entities" for this program are any U.S. State, the District of Columbia & Puerto Rico. State Governors must appoint an 'administering entity', which can be one, or a partnership of:

- The State, political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of State
- An Indian Tribe, Alaska Native entity or Native Hawaiian organization located in the State
- A foundation, corporation, institution, association, or coalition that is a not-for-profit, not a school, and is providing services in the State;
- A community anchor institution (not a school) located in the State.
- A local educational agency that is located in the State.
- An entity located in the State that carries out a workforce development program.
- An agency of the State that is responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities in the State.
- A public or multi-family housing authority that is located in the State.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Grant funds awarded for planning can only be used for the following purposes

- To develop the Stage Digital Equity Plan
- To make subgrants to any eligible entities <u>to assist in the development of the State Digital Equity Plan</u>

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

DIGITAL EQUITY (III/IV) | FOLLOWING PLANNING PROGRAM, STATES CAN APPLY FOR CAPACITY GRANTS TO IMPLEMENT

State Capacity Grant Program

OVERVIEW

Official name: State Digital Equity Capacity Grants

Funding pool: $1.44B

Type of program: State and Territory formula program

Programs' objective: To support the implementation of State Digital Equity Plans and digital inclusion activities

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility and administering entity options are **consistent with the planning program**

Note, in order to apply for Capacity Grants, States must have participated in and completed the planning program

ELIGIBLE COSTS & ACTIVITIES

Funds awarded under this program can only be used for the following purposes:
- To update or maintain the State's Digital Equity Plan (no more than 20% of amount awarded)
- To implement the State's Digital Equity Plan
- To award sub-grants to 'eligible entities' to assist in implementation of the State's Plan
- To pursue digital inclusion activities in the State consistent with the Plan
- To report back to the State on related activities
- To determine the efficacy of efforts (no more than 5% of awarded funds can be used)

No more than 3% can be used for administrative purposes

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

NTIA

DIGITAL EQUITY (IV/IV) | ONCE NTIA BEGINS AWARDING STATE CAPACITY GRANTS, COMPETITIVE PROGRAM WILL BE LAUNCHED

Competitive Grant Program

OVERVIEW

Official name: Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

Funding pool: $1.25B

Type of program: Competitive grant

Programs' objective: Support efforts to promote digital inclusion, achieve digital equity & improve adoption of broadband

ELIGIBILITY

Any of the following, if they are not serving / have not served, as administering entity under state program

- A political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality of a State, including an agency of a State that is responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities, or for providing public housing, in State
- Indian Tribe/ Alaska Native entity / Native Hawaiian organization
- A foundation, corporation, institution, or association that is a not-for-profit and not a school
- A community anchor institution
- A local educational agency
- Entity that carries out a workforce development program
- A partnership between any of the entities described above, and any additional entities approved by NTIA

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Must support at least one of the following, <u>to benefit covered population/s</u>

- Develop & implement digital inclusion activities
- Facilitate broadband adoption to provide educational and employment opportunities
- Implement training and/or other workforce development programs
- Make equipment, instrumentation, networking capability, hardware and software, or digital network technology available at low/no cost
- Construct, upgrade, expend, or operate new or existing public access computing centers through CAIs

Max 10% for administration; Max Federal share of any project is 90%; Max 10% for evaluation

Note: funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

NTIA REQUEST FOR COMMENT (RFC) AND LISTENING SESSIONS

NTIA is requesting public comment on a wide range of policy and program considerations associated with the new grant programs authorized and funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Commenters are encouraged to address any or all the questions enumerated in the RFC.

Comments Due: February 4, 2022 by 5:00pm ET

Please Submit Comments through Regulations.gov – Docket NTIA-2021-0002

For more information about upcoming listening sessions:
https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/events/latest-events

Available Resources

- Register for upcoming events: https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/events

- Application Guide: https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/ReConnect_Program_Application_Guide.pdf

- ReConnect website: https://usda.gov/reconnect
  - Fact Sheets & Frequently Asked Questions

- Contact Us: https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us

- FY 22 Funding Opportunity Announcement: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/10/25/2021-23128/rural-econnectivity-program

- Regulation: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-02-26/pdf/2021-03443.pdf

- General Field Representatives (GFRs): https://www.rd.usda.gov/contact-us/telecom-gfr/all

Q&A