Gilbert Resendez:

2:01

Hello folks, my name is Gilbert. I'll be your host and moderator for today. Thank you for joining us. Before we get started, I wanted to let folks know that if you are dialed in on the audio bridge, there is a portion of this webinar that is pre-recorded that you won't be able to hear if you're using that audio source. If you would like to continue using your phone for audio, for whatever reason, we've provided instructions on the slide here to help you download the GoToWebinar app, which can be found on the Apple app store or the Google Play Store. Apologies for that and we'll get started here shortly with the remainder of our program. Thank you very much.

2:58

Hello, and welcome to today's BroadbandUSA's webinar series on NTIA's grant programs authorized under the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021*.

3:09

My name is Gilbert Resendez, and I will be your moderator and host for today's webinar covering the Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) Pilot Program.

3:19

Today, before we get started, I'd like to go over a few housekeeping notes. First, please type any questions that you may have throughout the webinar in the Q&A box located on the right-hand side of the GoToWebinar console. We have information on all of our grant programs that were authorized under the *Consolidated Appropriations Act* on the BroadbandUSA website under the Grants page. There you will find information on not only the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot program, but our other two grant programs as well. Finally, a recording of this presentation, copies of the slides, and a transcript will be available on the BroadbandUSA website under Events- Past Events, on or before August 4th, 2021.

4:10

I would like to introduce our presenters for today's webinar. First, we are here to welcome Kevin Hughes, Broadband Program Specialist with NTIA and works on our Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program.

4:28

I am also joined today by Mr. Scott Woods. Scott is a Senior Broadband Program Specialist here at NTIA and leads the Connecting Minority Communities [Pilot] Program.

4:39

We are also joined today by Yongming "Ming" Qiu with the NIST Grants Office, and Mr. Tim Moyer, the Director of Data and Mapping with NTIA.

4:50

Like I said earlier, I am your moderator and host Gilbert Resendez. I work at NTIA with our state programs on the Broadband Infrastructure team, and I'm happy to be moderating today with the Connecting Minority Communities team.

5:06

Next, I'd like to go over the agenda for today's presentation.

5:09

First, we'll kick it off with an introduction and overview of the Connected Minority Communities Pilot Program led by Mr. Kevin Hughes.

5:18

Then, Scott Woods will give an introduction of the Connecting Minority Communities team.

5:25

Mr. Ming Qiu will then give an overview of the NIST Grants office and provide updates from NIST.

5:33

Mr. Scott Woods will then take the mic and go over our CMC Anchor Community Dashboard and provide another demonstration.

5:43

Next, Mr. Tim Moyer will introduce our new indicators of Broadband Need Map.

5:48

And then, I will close it out with a call for merit reviewers and discuss the next steps of the program before opening it up to Q&A.

5:58

Without further ado, Mr. Kevin Hughes.

Kevin Hughes:

6:05

Thanks, Gilbert. My name is Kevin Hughes. I'm a Broadband Program Specialist here at NTIA working on the Connecting Minorities Communities Pilot Program grant, and my job today would be to give you a brief overview of our grant.

6:25

So NTIA published the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program Final Rule in the Federal Register on Tuesday, June 15th. And now, the Final Rule establishes the regulations for the program as required by the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021*, and this lays out the

programmatic scope, eligibility, criteria, and general guidelines for the program.

6:53

Now, NTIA will publish the Notice of Funding Opportunity, or the NOFO, on Grants.gov, and this will provide even more details regarding the CMC eligibility guidelines, application instructions, and program requirements.

7:12

So, who can apply? Who's eligible?

7:15

Well, historically Black Colleges or Universities, or HBCUs; Tribal Colleges and Universities, TCUs; Minority Serving Institutions, MSIs; and consortiums led by HBCUs, TCUs, or MSIs that include a minority business enterprise or a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

7:41

So, when it comes to funding, how much is available? $268 million dollars. When we talk about program eligibility, CMC eligibility criteria and meeting the greatest unmet financial need are two very important things that you need to consider in your application.

8:06

So, what's the purpose of the funding? What can you use the funding for?

8:12

Well, you can use it to purchase broadband Internet access service, or any eligible equipment, or you can use it to hire and train information technology personnel. And this would be for the educational institution, to facilitate educational instruction and learning, including through remote instruction, which is really important during these COVID times. Or you can use the funding to operate the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), or to operate the tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. And again, additional program information will be provided to you in the NOFO when it's released, which is expected to be early to mid-August.

8:58

So when we talk about the funding purpose – again, funds can be used to purchase broadband Internet access service, including the installation or upgrade of broadband facilities on a one-time capital improvement basis to increase or expand capacity and connectivity at your university or institution. You can also use the funds to purchase or lease eligible equipment and devices for student or patron use. And you can use the funding to hire and train information technology personnel who are part of the eligible institution, the MBE, or tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

9:44

Now, when it comes to funding priorities, these are the priorities that were set by Congress, and I'll just mention them really quickly.

9:56

With regards to funding allocation, at least 40% of grant funds awarded will be made to HBCUs. At least 20% of all grant funds awarded to eligible recipients must be used to provide broadband access, and/or devices and equipment to students. Eligible recipients that receive a grant to provide broadband Internet access service, or eligible equipment to students, must prioritize students who are in need.

10:25

There's no match required for the funding and a two-year period of performance is also required. Program evaluation and data collection requirements will also be conducted by NTIA as part of the review process. And so, at this stage, I'm going to hand it over to Scott Woods, who's our Senior Broadband Program Specialist here at NTIA, and our lead on the CMC program team. Scott, take it away.

Scott Woods:

11:06

Hello again, everyone. My name is Scott Woods and I'm a Senior Broadband Program Specialist here with NTIA, and have the pleasure of serving as the Team Lead for the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program.

11:19

At this time, it is my pleasure to introduce the CMC Project team. We have a great collection of individuals and professionals with various backgrounds from the public sector to the private sector [and] philanthropic organizations who will serve as your federal program officers to guide you through the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program.

11:40

And so, without further ado, let's start the introductions. I'll start by introducing myself. Again, my name is Scott Works, the Senior Broadband Program Specialist and CMC Team Lead here at NTIA. I have a Bachelor's degree from Morehouse College (the Morehouse College) in Atlanta, Georgia. A Master in Public Policy from American University right here in Washington, DC, and a law degree from the Howard University School of Law, again, right here in Washington, DC. Prior to joining NTIA, I served as an Associate Attorney in a law firm here in DC, where I worked on a number of regulatory, legal, and business issues for telecommunications companies, telco carriers, telecommunications providers.

12:30

Since joining NTIA, I've worked on the BTOP Program serving as a federal program officer. I also worked on the administrative closeout of the BTOP program and that was a $4 billion grant program under the *American Re-investment and Recovery Act*. I've also served as a Manager of the BroadbandUSA Technical Assistance team. And then like I said

previously, I now serve as the Team Lead for the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. Although the bulk of my telecommunications experience is on the legal side as well as broadband infrastructure deployment, I really look forward to working with the CMC team and the HBCU, TCU, and MSI higher education community in this very important initiative to address access issues, to address connectivity, and digital divide issues amongst the HBCU, TCU, and MSI communities. And more importantly, the students, because as we all know, the students are the future of this country. So, with that, it is my pleasure to have the other team members introduce themselves. We have a great collection of individuals, and we look forward to working with you in the implementation and execution of this pilot program. It is very important to our community.

Francine Alkisswani:

13:50
Hello, everyone. My name is Francine Alkisswani, and I am a member of the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program team. I'm excited about this particular initiative. I'm happy to be a part of this team, and look forward to working with my fellow team members and with all of you. I am a Native West Virginian, otherwise called a Ridge Runner. I live in West Virginia now and probably the most important thing to know about me, paraphrasing E.E. Cummings is, "I regard tomorrow as my permanent address and if you find me there, I'll simply move away still further into now."

14:37
Thank you, enjoy the day and I hope today a good session for you.

Emy Tseng:

14:46
Hello, my name is Emy Tseng and I am a Senior Broadband Program Specialist and CMC Federal Program Officer at NTIA. I've worked at NTIA for about 12 years, focusing on digital inclusion and digital equity. I'm passionate about helping communities leverage broadband technology to further their own goal. Therefore, I'm so excited to be part of the Connecting Minority Communities [Pilot] Program and working with all your institution[s] and the communities that you serve. Thank you.

Kevin Hughes:

15:26
Hi everyone. My name is Kevin Hughes and I'm a Broadband Program Specialist and CMC Federal Program Officer here at NTIA, and proud to be on the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program grant team, or CMC.

15:43
I want to welcome you to today's webinar. And I hope that you find this webinar very informative in terms of leaning information on this wonderful grant that will help to address the digital divide and provide great opportunities across the US for our anchor universities and institutions. Enjoy the webinar.

Karen Archer Perry:

16:13

My name is Karen Archer Perry and I'm a Senior Policy Analyst with NTIA. Prior to joining this organization, I worked for more than 20 years at AT&T, Bell Laboratories, and the Lucent family of companies. But I've spent more than 12 years working in the field of digital inclusion and bridging the digital divide. Much of that work was focused on building solutions at scale.

16:40

I worked for the FCC, where I contributed to the National Broadband Plan, and I also was pleased to be a Program Officer at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, where I worked to improve broadband at public libraries and support librarians as they strengthen their advocacy skills.

16:59

I've especially enjoyed much of my work at NTIA where I've got to work directly with people in the field on their local broadband plans. I've learned a lot from the people that I've worked with. And I've also enjoyed sharing some of the best practices that we have at BroadbandUSA with many of the folks in the field.

17:22

With the CMC team, I'm looking forward to working with the great team of people that we've assembled here to put the CMC Pilot Program together. Working with our other federal agency partners, and also working with local leaders and higher education in order to develop and execute and support this Pilot Program in order to bridge the digital divide, drive economic development, and innovation across the country.

17:47

I have a Master's degree in Electrical Engineering from Cornell, but the foundation of my education is from Cape Cod Community College. So I'm excited that one of my roles on the CMC team will be working with community colleges. A lot has changed since I went to community college, so I'm really looking forward to learning more about what's current in the field, and supporting our community college partners in learning more about this program, and then using it to support their goals in the field.

18:16

I'm also one of the data experts on the team. We have a lot of data experts across our BroadbandUSA team, people who do a lot of deep data analysis and mapping. My data work is a little bit more practical. I really focus on working with people in the field to understand broadband data and to apply it to their broadband planning work.

18:37

So, I'll be available to help you if I can in any way, use data in your work as well as to help you across any of the broadband planning of any of our broadband program in any way that I can.

18:50
I look forward to working with you on all of our broadband programs. Thank you very much.

18:58

Pandora Beasley-Timpson:

Good afternoon. I'm Pandora Beasley-Timpson, Management and Program Analyst with NTIA's CMC Pilot Grant Program. I've been with NTIA for about 12 years, and I'm also a member of the CMC Grants Administration and Oversight team, as well as one of the primary contacts for merit and programmatic reviews. I am passionate about promoting job growth, economic development, and deploying advanced mobile technologies in distressed communities, primarily in the rural South.

19:30
I look forward to our work with resolving some of the challenges facing HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs all for the betterment of those communities and the vulnerable populations they're in. And I'm happy to be a part of this amazing group of talent.

19:47

Janice Wilkins:

Thank you, Scott for the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Janice Wilkins. [I am] a Broadband Program Specialist and a CMC Federal Program Officer at NTIA, Department of Commerce, Downtown, DC. I have been working at Commerce for over 10 years and have over 20 years of experience in contracts and grants. I'm so excited to be working alongside these amazing people and more importantly, to help amazing people like you to be successful in this the CMC Pilot Program. Thank you!

20:26

Michell Morton:

Hi, I'm Michell Morton and I am a Broadband Program Specialist and Connecting Minority Communities Federal Program Officer for NTIA. I'm new to the NTIA team. I have over 15 years of digital inclusion and grants experience. I look forward to working with stakeholders and our team.

20:52

Scott Woods:

I'd like to thank the CMC [Pilot] Program team for those introductions. I would also like to note that we have a new CMC team member who will be joining us real soon. Cameron Lewis is indicated here on this chart, and again, he'll be joining us shortly. At this time, I would like to turn it over to Yongming Qiu of the NIST Grants Office who will provide an update on the grant's office function for the CMC Pilot Program. Ming, over to you.

21:24

Yongming Qiu:

Thank you, Scott. Hello everyone. Good afternoon, or good morning, depending where you are joining us from. My name is Yongming Qiu, I'm

a Grants Officer with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in the grants management division. I have been with NIST for almost six years. Prior to joining NIST, I was with the Uniform Services University, where I served as a Grant Specialist for seven years and as a Financial Analyst for two years.

21:52

I've managed quite a few different grant programs at NIST. This is my first time partnering with NTIA to manage the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. I'm excited about the CMC Pilot Program and learning about your effort in your communities. I look forward to working with you all.

22:13

First, I would like to give an overview of who we are in the office of NIST, and then I will be taking you through the next few slides to provide some helpful resources and introduce some high level general best practices of the grant administrative requirements.

22:31

NTIA and NIST are sister agencies under the US Department of Commerce. [The] NIST Grants Office provides grants management services and serve as the grants office for the CMC Pilot Program. Our grants team consists of three main positions: the Grants Officer and Team Lead; Second Grants Officer, Sub Team Lead; and a group of Grant Specialists. We are very happy and excited to have the opportunity to provide grants management services for the NTIA CMC Pilot Program, as well as the Broadband Infrastructure Program.

23:11

I wanted to spend a little time to talk about the roles of the grants office and the program office. [The] grants office oversees the business management and administrative aspects of awards. Some of what we do is evaluate grant applications that complies with the statutes, regulations, and guidelines.

23:31

Conduct pre-award risk assessments, approve awards and amendments that abrogate the abrogate funds, and the award administration related issues, [and] provide an administration guidance and financial oversight.

23:47

For the NTIA Program Office, one of the main roles is to oversee programmatic and technical aspects of projects. As you learn more about CMC Pilot Program and begin considering program design from a grants management perspective, we offer these helpful resources. Grants.gov is a platform to use for most applications for financial assistance.

24:18

The CMC Final Rule, the NOFO would be published to Grants.gov. The applicants page offers information and resources to help you prepare for

the application process. In order to register in Grants.gov, you need to be registered in SAM.

24:38

We will talk a little bit more in the next slide about application systems. In line with the Final Rule, we introduced the Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 and the Department of Commerce (DOC) Financial Assistance Policy to include the DOC Standard Terms and Conditions. Lastly, the Federal Audit Clearinghouse maintain[s] a public database of company audits. While this may not be relevant to all entities, I encourage you to take some time to review the audit requirements into a CFR 200.

25:14

Application systems – as you see on this slide, all of this is necessary to apply. SAM and Grants.gov, common technical aspects of the forthcoming application unit. We will cover grant-specific administration topics.

25:30

You can anticipate that you should be registered with SAM and know that it may take a few days to confirm so build that into your timeline. All applicants must register in SAM before submitting a complete application packet in Grants.gov. All of these application system stamps are necessarily to apply to [the] CMC Pilot program.

25:53

So, you have to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Currently, the DUNS number is the official UEI. You have to have an EIN. You need to be registered with SAM. You need to be registered with Grants.gov. You have to have the authorized organization representative who is able to submit your application. And finally, [the] application will be submitted through Grants.gov. I know that sometimes when Grants.gov goes down for maintenance. You don't want to wait until the very last minute to submit your application.

26:30

Now I'm going to talk a little bit about administrative requirements.

26:35

The grants office's role is partially to monitor and ensure an entity's compliance with the terms and conditions of the award. In general, DOC awards are subject to these administrative requirements: Uniform Guidance, DOC standard terms and conditions, [and] specific award conditions. The Uniform Guidance, or 2 CFR 200 is the streamline government-wide framework for grants management.

27:02

Subpart A includes acronyms and definitions used throughout the Uniform Guidance. Consider referencing these as you explore other subparts.

27:14

Administrative requirements covered in Subparts B, C, D. Section C, you can learn about the general pre-award assessment requirements. Subpart D discuss post federal award requirements such as statutory and national policy requirements, financial management, and internal controls.

27:37
Remember, our intent today is to share information that can be helpful as you consider federal financial assistance.

27:45
Subpart E outlines the cost principle, discuss basic consideration of costs such as cost reasonableness, allocability, and ultimately allowability.

27:59
Here, you will read specifics about direct and indirect costs, as well as special consideration for institutions of higher education. And lastly, you will find general provisions for selected items of cost. Subpart F covers all the requirements for nonfederal entity expending federal awards. While this may not be new to you or your organization, we hope you find this to be helpful. While the 2 CFR 200 layout is in chronological order in relation to the federal award lifecycle…

28:36
The DOC terms and Conditions are divided by sections. I'm just going to name a few here. Section A-Programmatic Requirements. Section B-Financial Requirements. Section C-Internal Controls, and so on. As I mentioned earlier, in general, the DOC Terms and Conditions applies to the DOC Financial Assistance Awards. Lastly, specific conditions are incorporated to the financial assistance awards.

29:11
Allow me to elaborate on one section of the Uniform Guidance: cost allowability in Subpart E. All costs must be necessary for the performance of the award. Costs must not be prohibited by statute, cost principles in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E, another regulation, program guidance, or the terms of the award. Costs must be reasonable. The cost does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. That is prudent person test. Costs must be allocable – costs incur either directly or indirectly to carry out the scope of work. Costs must be allowable. Cost meets the criteria for optimized expenditure in the Federal Cost Principles that is necessary and reasonable for the performance of the award and not otherwise specifically prohibited.

30:17
The 2 CFR 200 talks about financial management standards for the federal award. I want to highlight a few here. A nonfederal entity must have and maintain an adequate financial management system.

30:32
The financial system must be able to provide reference that adequately document the source and application of funds for the funded activities, as

well as one reporting requirement and be able to provide comparison of expenditures against the approved budgets.

30:51

A nonfederal entity must also have written procedures and procurement policies that meet the requirements under this section, and then have an effective internal control over the federal award. Also, the nonfederal entity is responsible for adequate monitoring of subrecipient activities. It is important to have procedures and, for example, sub-award monitoring and management that meet the requirements for pass through entity. And finally, the financial management must be in compliance with the terms and conditions of the award.

31:30

I want to thank you for joining us here today. Now I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Scott Woods. And thank you, everyone.

Scott Woods:

31:42

Thank you, Ming, for that update on the NIST Grants office. We thank you and your team and we look forward to working with you in the implementation and execution of the CMC Pilot Program. So right now, everyone, I want to transition to a brief update on the CMC dashboard.

32:03

I want to thank those of you who have provided feedback on the CMC Anchor Community Eligibility Dashboard and I just want you to know that we've identified some sort of minor flaws and limitations in the data. And I just mind you again, to note the caveat on the About tab of the dashboard. But again, we've identified that, except for Puerto Rico, the CMC Dashboard does not contain American Community Survey (ACS) data. The census tract data on median income, median household income, and median household size for US territories, including those independent nations that are in a compact of free association with the US. So what does that mean?

32:47

They're not reflected, at least their anchor community boundary, is not reflected in the CMC dashboard. But the schools that classify as one of the eligible institutions, either an HBCU or one of the subcategories of MSIs, they are included visually in in the dashboard.

33:11

So, you have some examples here of those territories that are impacted for the US-VI. It actually, the University of the Virgin Islands, conducts the census survey for the territory. And so, again, you will see this in the NOFO. There will be an opportunity for a territory to submit its own census tract data or latest census tract data if the data is otherwise disputed or otherwise unavailable. So again, ACS data is not reflected in the map.

33:47

So therefore, when you go to the dashboard, those territories aren't listed in the toolbar up at the top of the dashboard. We understand that. We're working on that. But again, you'll be able to address those in the application process with the exception for Puerto Rico, that does have census tract-based information from the ACS data.

34:14
Number two, the previous version of the dashboard had certain MSI designations from the Department of Education's Eligibility Matrix. They were deemed either 4R or 5R as religious institutions.

34:28
Those designated schools would be eligible for grant funding if they had non-religious or vocational curriculum. Otherwise, the Department of Education has deemed these institutions not eligible for federal funding. So again, these schools were reflected visually in the CMC dashboard, we have since removed those. And again, if you have any questions about that, you can reach out to me personally and we can discuss that methodology.

35:03
Then finally, another limitation, or flaw that we fixed in certain circumstances for certain states. There was a data entry limitation under the school names, the drop-down box on the CMC toolbar, that would prevent you from selecting the school in the drop-down box, and then having a corresponding list under the List tab of all of those impacted census tracts. This only impact is certain schools and states that had MSI designated schools in one particular category that exceeded the current data entry limit of 100.

35:41
We have since fixed that. We've increased that data entry limit. And so now all of those schools should be available to access on the toolbar which then effectuates the List tab for the individual, census tract data information.

35:56
So, I hope that information is helpful to you. If you have any questions about the methodology or any other flaws or limitations that you've uncovered in your use and utilization of the CMC Anchor Community Eligibility dashboard, please feel free to reach out to me and let me know. Again, we thank you. It's been overwhelming, positive feedback on the dashboard. So, continue to use it. And again, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

36:29
And so now I'm going to, again, go through another demo of the CMC Anchor Community Eligibility Dashboard. Again, if you want a full explanation of the tool, you can visit our previous webinar where we

actually did the full-blown demo. But for those of you who may not have been able to view that, I'm going to do a short demo for you right now.

36:53
We'll put a link to the Dashboard in the chat. You can also visit our website and information on the Dashboard should be up on our website very soon.

37:03
But again, just by way of overview, if you go to the About tab that has our legal caveats about the limitations of this tool. It has an overview of the methodology that we use. And again, this is our application of the Anchor Community Eligibility Standard as contained in the Act and the CMC Final Rule. Again, the application of the 250% poverty threshold, as well as a discussion on the margin of error for the data contained therein, specifically with the ACS data, median household income, and household size.

37:44
So, really quickly, if you go and look at the tab up here at the top. You can select the school type, the state, and then the school name. The school eligibility type will vary by the eligible institution's types of the CMC Pilot program, so you will see AANAPISI schools. You will also see Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian schools. You also see the HBCUs. You can also see HSIs as well as the Native American serving non-Tribal institutions.

38:22
You will also see the predominantly Black institutions. And then finally, all of the Tribal institutions, particularly with that alternative approach that we talked about in the CMC Final Rule and the methodology does contain therein. So, let's go to this example. I'm going to go to HSIs. I want to go to Georgia.

38:46
Then I want to select, again, Dalton State College. And again, you want to utilize the toolbar here up at the top and then hit the corresponding List tab. And again, that will show you all of the applicable census tracts that are eligible for CMC programming and funding within Dalton State College's 15-mile anchor community boundary.

39:11
So, again, those highlighted census tracts are those areas indeed that are eligible, meaning that they do not exceed 250% of the poverty threshold and our application of that rule is reflected in this tool.

39:27
So, again, if you click on a particular census tract, information on that census tract will pop up, median household income, household size, the poverty threshold number, the 250% poverty threshold calculation. A determination of whether that particular census tract will qualify for CMC.

And again, information about the school type, the school name, and the Department of Education ID number.

So, you get all that information in there. If you're not really used to a point and click, and you want to use this toolbar, over here, this List tab. It lists from numeric order, from lowest census tract household income information all the way to the highs. So, again, you will start here and if you click on it and look on the visualization, you will see the census tract will highlight itself in purple.

So, again, if you want to change the view of the base map view here in the image, you can go to this Base Map tab here, and you can change the various views of the imagery of the base maps. Right now, it's the topographic view, but you can go to street view. You can do a satellite view or some sort of image hybrid view to see the census tracts. Again, whatever you're comfortable with, you can do.

So for purposes of this demo, I have topographic view on. If you have some questions about the other surrounding census tracts and the information regarding their household size or their median household income, you can utilize this Layers tab over here and I can turn on all of the median household income for all of the tracts. And then they'll highlight there, and then I'll be able to see, again, for this particular census tract, I get the median household income in this area. I get a view of it by age, and if I hit this arrow, I will also get a view by race. So again, 51,455. I know that's the median household income level. I can go here and look at the household size.

And, again, even if I do a back of the envelope calculation, this median household income for this household size would be above the median poverty threshold level for the CMC Program. And therefore, this census tract or all of the gray area census tracts do not qualify.

Remember, if I go back to the original view, turn off the household tracts and turn off the median size and median income tracts, again, I only get those census tracts that indeed qualify.

So, for purposes of a consortium applicant of the school, it has to be the leader on that, but it can partner with a Minority Business Enterprise or a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization and can do specific programming and funding in these neighborhoods designated by the census tracts. And, again, the school can do this as well to the extent that their students are located in these neighborhoods and census tracts as well.

So, again, if you have any questions about the Anchor Community Eligibility Dashboard, please don't hesitate to reach out.

43:02

I want to do one more example really quick. I touched on this on the last one. This is in reference to all of the Tribal colleges and universities contained in the dashboard.

43:16

So if you recall, if you look at the methodology in the Final Rule, and I touched on this a little bit in the first demo, but you will see certain Tribal areas, Tribal College areas that anchor community eligibility varies, right? In some cases, it is the traditional 15-mile radius.

43:35

In others, it is not. So again, if you refer back to the Act and the Final Rule, Congress demanded, if you will, and requested that NTIA come up with and develop an alternative methodology for the Anchor Community Eligibility Standard to ensure that the areas around the Tribal colleges for land held in Trust that it was an applicable, comparable Anchor Community Standard with the traditional 15-mile radius. So, I just wanted to highlight that for those specific impacted Tribal schools, in fact, that we've done that. So you see that is the reason for the variance between those Tribal institutions that have the 15-mile radius and for those that have a boundary that is indeed larger. We have accommodated and addressed that requirement.

44:31

If you have any questions about any of the methodological approaches that are reflected in this Dashboard, you can refer to the Final Rule. We outline and outlay these specific approaches, the datasets, use the assumptions. It's all laid out in the Final Rule, and then you can see that, again, reflected here in the CMC Dashboard. So with that said, I'm going to turn it over to Tim Moyer who is going to talk about our Broadband Indicators map, and then Gilbert will come back on and he will take us back all the way through the merit review, and then ultimately through our Q&A. So, thank you for the opportunity to be here with you today, and I will turn it over to Tim.

45:24

Tim Moyer: So, my name is Tim Moyer. I'm the Director of Data and Mapping here at NTIA. I'll be providing an overview of our new Indicators of Broadband Need map.

45:33

So over the next few slides, you're going to see examples of the indicators of need data that we've included in the map. I'm going to dig into those in detail, so, I just want to provide an overview here, and then we'll transition into the demo of the map itself.

45:49

So, you can see speed tests. We have American Community Survey (ACS) data. And at this point, I'm going to share my screen and take over.

So we start here at NTIA's BroadbandUSA website, select Resources, go to Data & Mapping, and we come to the Public Map & Tools section. We've got an overview here and then we can go directly to the map itself.

So, the Indicators of Broadband Need interactive map was designed to bring multiple, third-party data sources together to help the public better understand the digital divide and the connection between poverty and lack of broadband access or use.

So, I'm going to provide a high-level overview of the map so we can see how to navigate, and then I'm going to dig into the details.

So, when you first turn on the map, you're going to get this popup screen here that provides an explanation of what the map is. We'll select OK. Here we have the different indicators of need. You'll see that we have data at the county, the census tract, and the census block. We also have supporting information here from Minority Serving Institutions and Tribal lands.

And as we dig into the details, I want you to keep an eye down here because when we zoom into different levels of geography, you'll see that this will change. And interestingly, the popups will change also. It's a dynamic map.

If we look at our legend, red is an indicator of need. Green means lack of an indicator of need, and gray means there's no data. We also have for our Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) color coded by institution type. And we can see here how the Tribal lands will be displayed.

Over here, we have a filter that enables us to toggle individual MSI types on and off, and I'll show you that in action in a little bit.

And in our information section, we have an overview about the map. An important disclaimer here: the data presented as is – we've collected third-party data. This is not data that NTIA generated ourselves, and so we're bringing that data together in a meaningful way.

We've provided a way to access the underlying aggregated data that supports the map, and we provided layer by layer descriptions with links back to the source material.

Over here, you'll see a user guide. Again, we have information about the data layers themselves. Then for folks that aren't as familiar with GIS, this is a commercial off the shelf software package. And so we've got some instructions about how to do some basic GIS navigating and all the different sections here.

We also have a FAQs document, frequently asked questions for things that folks may find interesting. And this will be a living document that will grow over time.

So, let's go back to the map.

So what's interesting with GIS is layering. And so you'll see here that we have all of these layers toggled on right now. I'm going to turn a few of them off and then talk about them individually.

So we start with the 477 data. And the way we presented this is that we know that 477 data is presented at the census block, and the methodology is that if anybody at the census block is served, the whole block is served. And so that can lead to overstatement of broadband availability in some areas.

So what we wanted to do is find out the areas where the broadband providers themselves have identified in the 477 reporting that they don't have services that meet the 25/3 threshold. And so you'll see here that the areas in red don't have 25/3 infrastructure.

If we look at the Microsoft usage data, think of this as machine-to-machine type data. When we're asleep at night, if you have a Microsoft product that connects to the Internet, it can download security software and things like that. Microsoft has a way to measure the speed on the download. And so what we're saying here is that 75% or more of the people in the county that use Microsoft services are not downloading at 25 megabits. And so when we turn that on, you'll see that the areas that got redder reinforce the 477 data.

But we also see lots of areas where the Microsoft data suggests that there are other areas that may not be at 25/3. So, I'll toggle this back off and you

can see the 477 data. And then when you bring the Microsoft data on, it's a little bit of a different picture.

So look at Measurement Lab. Measurement Lab is crowdsource speed test data. We see a similar story at the county level. It reinforces some of the 477 data, but also highlights areas that potentially are an indicator of need. When you combine all three together, you really see them reinforcing [one another]. And it's important to note that NTIA recognizes that there is no silver bullet, single dataset that's going to answer all these questions. There are challenges with any crowdsource dataset.

So it's the layering of multiple data sets that reinforces and gives you more confidence as areas become redder that that's something worth digging into.

Now we'll look at the census tract level. We have Ookla speed test data. And you'll see that the Ookla also has lots of pockets that weren't identified in the 477 data, but also reinforces the 477 data.

I'm going to turn that off and we're going to turn over our attention to some of the survey data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. We see here that 25% of households report that they don't have Internet access at all. In this we see that 25 percent of households say that they don't have some sort of computer device – either a computer, a laptop, or a phone that's connected to the Internet.

This down here is very interesting if you look at the poverty dataset. It's going to take a second to render, but we have 20% or more of households are below the poverty line. And you're going to see a really interesting correlation here when I start turning on the Tribal lands and the Minority Serving Institutions. Minority Serving Institutions follow the poverty line. Similarly, you're going to see the Tribal lands populate here.

Now I mentioned that [we have the ability to filter] the Minority Serving Institutions, so I'm going to go over here. Maybe I want to see HBCUs, or maybe I want to see Tribal colleges. Depending on what your specific use case is, you can toggle things on and off and investigate.

So, I'm going to go back here, and I'm going to turn these back off, and I'm going to go back with the 477, and the Ookla. Now, everything we've done so far is at a macro national level, but we have the ability to zoom into areas. And so I'll ask you again to keep an eye over here as the county tract and census block.

53:27

And [I] will let you know the level of geography [that] we're at. But I'm going to go look at East Carroll Parish, Louisiana.

53:45

And I'm going to click here. You'll see that we're at the county level. The search results, if I click here, is going to bring up a popup of information.

53:59

A few things that are interesting here. It's dynamic from the perspective that it doesn't matter which layers I have turned on – the popup will have information that's available at that level of geography.

54:12

And so we'll see here that we're looking at Issaquena County, Mississippi.

54:18

And we also have East Carroll Parish, because at this level of geography there were two in that general area. Looking at East Carroll Parish, we see that we have close to 7000 people. The survey data says that 55% of the households in this area don't have Internet access, close to 52% don't have some kind of computer device. We see that the Measurement Lab (M-Lab) data actually says that at the county level, we do have 25/3 – it looks at 28/9 roughly.

54:50

The Ookla speed test data is slightly lower than the 18/8 range, and then we see that Microsoft data there is saying that 10% aren't getting over 25 megabits on the download.

55:05

What gets interesting now is if I zoom in and I go to a lower level of geography. As I zoom in here, you saw down here that we change to the tract. And so the popup now changed to the tract and now it's focused on the layers that have tract level detail.

55:27

So again we see here in Issaquena County. [There is a] little over one thousand people in that county. ACS is saying 58% [are] without Internet access, [and] 45% [are] without some kind of computer device. And the Ookla speed tests at this level of granularity is telling us 8/3, so certainly not 25/3.

55:52

And then as we zoom to a little bit more, we're going to see that it'll change to the census block. It's taking a second here. Apologies for the lack of performance.

56:43

Now you saw that the tract and the census block was activated. And so now when I click in here, I'm going to have census block information. So I see the 477 data and I also see census tract data.

57:03

So this is all a visualization, a way to navigate through the map. I mentioned that we also have the ability to download the data itself. What we've done here is provide three levels of geography.

57:18

I'm going to go with the county as an example and we can download this. [I'll] bring it up. I can go here and do a nice simple filter, and then I can go find that dataset.

57:43

We'll go back to Louisiana here. Hit OK. Now we'll go to East Carroll. Click on that. Then we'll see that all that data is here: number of households, those who don't have a computer, poverty level, Ookla data population, Measurement Lab data. So depending on whether or not you want a visualization where you want to use this aggregated data for different reasons – [it] is all right there. That was important to us to be able to provide that underlying data.

58:29

Gilbert Resendez: Thank you. Next, I will go over our NTIA's call for merit reviewers for our grant programs and then discuss the next steps of the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program.

58:42

As we've mentioned on previous webinars, NTIA has put out a call for merit reviewers for all of our programs. If you're interested in serving as a merit reviewer for Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program, please send your resume, making sure that it includes the information on the screen to GrantReviewer@NTIA.gov. If you have any questions about serving as a merit reviewer, you can also e-mail GrantReviewer@NTIA.gov.

59:14

I'd also like to point out that we have worked with our attorneys and internal processes here at NTIA to ensure that if you'd like to serve as a merit reviewer and apply for one of our programs, you can. If you have questions about that process, please e-mail us and we're happy to discuss further.

59:33

Next, I'd like to go over the next steps for the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program.

59:40

Previously, in June, we published the Final Rule for this program and we put out a call for merit reviewers and did stakeholder outreach and provided pre-application technical assistance. The next step is to publish the Notice of Funding Opportunity, or NOFO. We are committed to having that NOFO published by mid-August and [it] is currently working

its way through the clearance process. But we are very committed to having that published by mid-August.

1:00:10
And with that, I'd like to thank everyone for joining us today on our Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program webinar, and I will invite our presenters back for Q&A session. Thank you.

1:00:32
Great. Thank you, Scott. [*Audio echos*] I think we fixed the audio problem there. Thank you to Scott and the other panelists for being on today's call, and for your wonderful presentations.

1:00:46
We have a few questions from the chat, people have been asking questions. If you have questions that have come up since our presentation, please drop them in the Q&A box and I'll try to get them and if not, we will always work to incorporate them in a FAQ document for this program.

1:01:04
The first question is can you post the URL to the data? It came during the Indicators of Broadband Need map. I think they mean the IBM link. They could also mean the Dashboard or the link for either. If you able to drop in the chat, folks did ask for that. And the second one I wanted to get out of the way right off the top was during the discussion on the Indicators of Broadband Need [map], someone said this is impressive and reflects a significant comprehensive development effort for us. Thank you.

1:01:37
You're very welcome, we're very proud of the work that went into developing that tool.

1:01:44
All right. Next question. Since we're on the topic of data, I'll go ahead and get the next data question out of the way for you, Scott. With regard to the CMC Dashboard and the information on there, a person submitted a question. In my county, my community college, which is an HSI, is not listed but the local university is listed. Is there a way for folks to inquire more about why that wasn't listed if they see an institution that may be qualified as a Minority Serving Institution?

1:02:20
Scott Woods: Yes, absolutely. They can contact me and we can research it. You know, again, as we say it in the caveat, with the tool. It's not perfect, you know, but it does reflect the 2020 Eligibility Matrix.

1:02:33
So, if your institution has recently received an updated determination of status from the Department of Education, contact me, send me an e-mail,

we'll schedule an appointment, and then we can research it and walk through it with you.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:02:51
Great. Thank you very much.

1:02:55
The next one I'll shift to is on how to apply for the grants, or grant application consideration. The question is are there any consideration needed when submitting an application for multiple qualified institutions that serve the same census area? I know a lot of institutions overlap if they're built closely. You said you went to Morehouse in the Atlanta area, there a number at HBCUs, rather Minority Serving Institutions. So, what considerations should applicants take into account?

Scott Woods:

1:03:29
That's a really good question, and part of the Rules, and we'll lay this out in more detail in the NOFO which is coming shortly. We're talking days, not weeks. But each institution will make its case. And we do understand that there's overlap in those census tracts, but the eligibility determination for each institution is made on that institution's basis. So, again, using Atlanta for an example. And I'll just use that since Gilbert, you threw that out. If Morehouse submitted an application, it would be evaluated even though it had those census tracts identified the same as Clark Atlanta University would, right. We would do something programmatically once the funding decisions were made, again to address that overlap issue. But that's nothing that you would be able to do from the applicant's side in terms of submitting the application. Your job will be to submit your application, make your case for your proposal, and then we will deal with any of the programmatic issues once those decisions are made.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:04:33
Great, thank you. I'm seeing also a couple of questions on when we can get a copy of the presentation. That will be posted next week. I believe August 4th is what I said in the presentation earlier. A copy of this presentation and the recording of this webinar and a transcript will be posted to the Broadband SA website next week under the Broadband SA Events-Past Event page. Please keep an eye out for that. We'll be sure to have that posted in a timely manner.

1:05:10
Next, we have some general program questions that I've pulled out. With all the data and mapping indicators, how does NTIA include those markets to have multiple broadband providers, but have very low broadband adoption uptake, primarily because of affordability? I believe that question came during the conversation around the Indicators of Broadband Need map.

Scott Woods:

1:05:33
I can take that; I'll just ask for further clarification on that. Just reach out to me. We can put you in contact with the data and mapping team and we can discuss that in more detail. Again, we presented this information with respect to the CMC program because the CMC program allows the institution to provide supplemental information to make the case, right. And we're just providing you with tools to be able to do that, both the Dashboard, as well as the Indicators of Broadband Need [map]. You can use those tools in conjunction or not, but if you have really specific questions about the map, the mapping methodology, I would just ask to reach out to us offline, and we can have those discussions in more detail.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:06:25
Thank you, Scott. I see some questions coming in regarding the NOFO and some other programmatic guidelines so I'll just go ahead and pick those up first so we get them sooner rather than later.

1:06:38
The first on the NOFO, once the NOFO is published, when do you expect the application will be due?

Scott Woods:

1:06:45
Right, so this is where I'm going to market our next August webinar session. I want everyone to get the word out that we will cover in detail, both the programmatic and the grants office, the NOFO. It should be public by then [and] available. And, again, as I said before, in previous webinars, we're looking at a 90-to-120-day application window. But the NOFO when published will have that precise date, when the application would be due, and all the requirements that will be needed to submit that application.

1:07:22
So, again, I'm talking days, not weeks before the NOFO is available. And we do have an upcoming August webinar session for CMC that we plan to focus on the NOFO, the Notice of Funding Opportunity. So, please make plans to attend and we will have a very robust program to address all of your issues, questions, and the requirements.

Kevin Hughes:

1:07:51
And if I could just piggyback on that, Scott, really quickly. We really want all of the applicants to remain vigilant during this time, because as Scott said, the Notice of Funding Opportunity can be released at any time within this window, within this period. So we really want you guys to stay vigilant and be ready.

Scott Woods:

1:08:16
Absolutely.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:08:18

Thank you. Yes, check our website for updates. I'll go ahead and do a plug – if you have not signed up for our newsletter or e-mail updates, go ahead and do that now on the BroadbandUSA website.

1:08:32
The next question I have is what criteria or guidelines do we require from subrecipients to join our application? What items are required by a subrecipient? For example, resumes or pro forma financials.

Scott Woods:
1:08:47
Ming, you want to take that one from the grants office standpoint?

1:08:56
So, looks like you're on mute, Ming. Again, this is part of the COVID challenge. We're going to get those printed up and sent those out to folks.

1:09:06
But generally, the NOFO, everyone, will have all of the details about all of the requirements from the application, to subcontractors, to subrecipients. It literally lays out on a step-by-step basis all of the information, both programmatic [and] grants office, legal, all of the information that you'll need to fill the application and address all of the requirements. In addition, in this presentation being laid out. Several of the governing grants office, grants law, grant statutes that govern the submission of applications so you can also do a cursory search of those and we're pretty standard with the terms and conditions of those requirements.

1:09:47
Again, stay tuned for the NOFO. I know you've been hearing that for the last several months. Believe me, we're tired of saying it as well, stay tuned for the NOFO and that will have all of the information that you'll need. And then we'll be able to address really specific questions that you'll have regarding any of that information contained in the NOFO. Thank you.

Yongming Qiu:
1:10:14
Thank you for taking that question. Yes, Scott laid it out perfectly about what is required, you know, in terms of subrecipient requirements.

1:10:25
The NOFO will have more specific information about you know, what specifically required to submit with the application package. The 2 CFR 200 also lays out a little bit about detailed information about, you know, the requirement for managing and monitoring the subrecipient. So, in terms of the application, there will be more information there on the NOFO.

Gilbert Resendez:
1:10:50
Great. Thank you very much.

1:10:54

Kevin Hughes:

Ming, can you give an example of what an eligible consortium application may look like? The question didn't provide much more context than that. I know we do talk that consortia are eligible applicants.

1:11:19
Well definitely, I think from the perspective of when an application is submitted on behalf of a consortium, we definitely are looking for the university that is a part of the group to take lead on that.

1:11:42
So, I don't know if there's, from the question as it was posed, I don't know if that answers a little bit about what they were asking. I think we would need a little bit more information. But definitely, we're looking for the university to take lead, with regards to the submitting of the application and everything involved in the process. Scott, you wanted to jump in?

Scott Woods:

1:12:08
Yeah, I'm going to add too, because this is a Pilot Program, and then you have the opportunity to meet a great team of folks that we put together to oversee and implement this program, we actually will have programmatic examples in the NOFO.

1:12:24
Again, not exhaustive, but to give you an idea of the type of activities and projects that would be otherwise acceptable under the CMC Program. And then from there, if you have any specific questions, we're still conducting outreach, we're still soliciting ideas, encouraging innovative approaches and solutions. So, again, once you see that NOFO, please feel free to reach out to us, schedule time with the CMC Project team. We can debate and look at what you provide, what you want to do, what you plan, provide feedback, you know, get your insight. You know, again, we're encouraging innovative approaches again, and I make this point every time that we do our outreach: we understand that the need across all of our institutions is greater than what this program can provide. We do understand that.

1:13:18
So, if your needs are, you know, campus-based connectivity, if your floor is, I need to provide equipment for my students in need, students that don't have the equipment, you can absolutely do that. But again, we're encouraging also to think outside of the box. Let's think of some innovative things that we can do, given the parameters of the program that really push the envelope of things that we haven't really thought of before.

1:13:46
And again, we think once the NOFO comes out, we'll be able to have more detailed, initial conversations about how you can structure a project and submit an application. So again, I'm going to re-iterate again, we're days away, not weeks away. So please just stay tuned for our website and any of our announcements on that NOFO.

Gilbert Resendez:	1:14:11 Great. Thank you very much, Scott. I have a few interesting questions on eligible uses. First, would procuring infrastructure, installation, and service with our Minority Serving Institution as the lead applicant, what can our entry point for high speed, fiber-based internet access? And then, using community partner physical location for point to multipoint, or community mesh wireless broadband expansion be eligible? I think that gets to the – if off campus connectivity an eligible part of this program.
Scott Woods:	1:14:49 Yeah, I mean, again, that's really specific. So, I would ask that, you know, I would say generally, you know, for expansion of, you know, broad expansion, access to blanket communities generally is not allowed where we're talking more about, you know, providing devices and the connectivity. For example, a number of devices, a number of tablets have Wi-Fi or 5G connectivity. You know, those are the things that you can do.
	1:15:15 You distribute to both students and in the community in support of a Minority Broadband Enterprises' operations, or tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. When you're talking about expanding sort of infrastructure and access into the community, that's something that's not contemplated or prohibited, and is in fact prohibited by the CMC Rules and Regulations, so again, something that specific, I would say contact us. You know, let's schedule time with the program team. We can talk to your scenario and give you feedback on what you can do, because we also have other grant programs – we have our Broadband Infrastructure Program, we have our Tribal Connectivity Broadband Program as well. One or more of those activities may be better suited for one of those programs rather than the CMC. So, again, please feel free to contact us and we can have those discussions.
Gilbert Resendez:	1:16:16 I know we've talked a lot about how training is an eligible expense. Can you talk about what types of training expenses are eligible for operating distance education? Minority Business Enterprise, tech, and 501(c)(3), and what have you.
Scott Woods:	1:16:34 I will say, yes. I don't want to sound like a broken record but the direct answer to the question is, yes. And we have for examples of those in the upcoming Notice of Funding Opportunity. Training is one of the covered activities, particularly when we're talking about, you know, digital access, inclusion, equity, connectivity, you know, workforce development, you know, those types of trainings are covered. I think we've done a really good job in laying out specific examples in the NOFO. And then once you see that, I think we could have, you know, really specific conversations during our next webinar in August where we plan to really systematically

go through and break down the important components of the NOFO, both on the program side as well as our grants office partners and those grant requirements.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:17:37
Great. Thank you very much, Scott. I did see an interesting question come up around devices that are procured under this grant program. Who would retain ownership of the device? I guess the question is getting at – is the school loaning these devices to students? Are they procuring them for students, and the students retain ownership?

Scott Woods:

1:18:01
Definitely not procuring ownership with students, I can tell you that as a soon-to-be college parent. No, no, it's going on behalf of the university, right. So, any funding on behalf of the federal government would be for the university to purchase those, or through the university to the Minority Business Enterprise or the tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. But ownership in that will be jointly held because you're using federal funds to purchase it.

1:18:32
With the federal government, with security interests, as well as in the name of the institutio, or the eligible entity. Again, the MBE or the tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. So, again, we can, we will deal with that during our next webinar session. That's a good question. But in no instances will ownership be transferred to a student or an external third party.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:19:00
Great, thank you. I'm glad we got that one covered then. Can schools collaborate jointly on an application? I know we've mentioned a few different markets, there are a number of qualifying institutions within Atlanta. And DC – there's a number of institutions that qualify here. Are they able to apply together?

Scott Woods:

1:19:18
Yes, Kevin, we just addressed this in an outreach session that we did. And Kevin had a really good response to that, so, I'm going to set him up, and then I'll come back with a response, Kevin.

Kevin Hughes:

1:19:31
Well, I think, you know, we definitely expect and appreciate that schools will collaborate with each other. But, you know, from the perspective of applying, obviously, there is one school that is applying. In other words, each school applies for themselves. The whole issue of collaboration, it's anticipated, we expect that. But each school, they're submitting their own application. If it's a part of a consortium, again, the school would be partnering with a 501(c)(3) organization or an MBE. So, it wouldn't be two schools partnering with each other and in that instance. So, Scott, I don't know if you wanted to add more to that.

Scott Woods:

1:20:29

That's a great point and, I think when we've conducted our outreach, you know, we understand you're going to collaborate, right. You're going to have some instances a service provider partner identified, so maybe a philanthropic organization.

1:20:45

You know, but again, in terms of who would be eligible to submit an application for CMC funding, again, the authorizing legislation makes it clear, you know, the Final Rule and what will also be reflected in the NOFO. As Kevin said, you know, it has to be that institution or if it's a consortium application, you know, the MBE or the tax-exempt 501(c)(3), you know, with the school as the lead in that application.

1:21:12

But we understand in the planning and design, and even in the execution and implementation, there are a number of different philanthropic, public, private partners, you know, that a school will engage, and maybe even discussions and collaborations offline with schools that are either crossed the same, anchor community boundary areas are close. I mean, we do understand those levels of discussions will happen and, in fact, should happen.

1:21:40

But, again, understanding that, you know, we only have $268 million in this pilot program. Our goal is to put forth recommendations to Congress to expand both the footprint of this program and the funding capability. We see this as a first step and hopefully we'll open up more opportunities based on the successes and data collection and evaluation that we can conduct with the first set of CMC applicants. We look forward to that.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:22:13

Thank you very much, Scott. Could you or Kevin talk a little bit about what the application process may look like for a college that has branch campuses in multiple state or just branch campuses generally – what that may be like?

Scott Woods:

1:22:31

So, that's a good question. We dealt with this a little bit in our outreach. Each individual school, because we base part of eligibility criteria on information received from the Department of Education, again, a school can only submit one application, and we use the information provided to the Department of Education, that one address, right. Even if it's a branch campus, you know, it will have one address, the issue of satellite campuses come up.

1:23:01

To the extent that the Department of Education recognizes those satellite campuses as separate and independent, then we would consider, or you

would be allowed to submit a separate application from either the main campus or that satellite campus. But to the extent that it's not recognized as a truly independent and separate campus, we use that information that's reported to the Department of Education through the IPEDS system, as that as that governing point, both as an address, as well as the institution, as well as establishing that anchor boundary to determine eligibility.

Kevin Hughes:

1:23:42
They would also be able to take a look in the tool, as well, to make that determination as well. Correct, Scott?

Scott Woods:

1:23:51
Absolutely. We encourage you to use the tool. It represents, like we said in the demo, our application of the methodology for the first 3 prongs of eligibility requirement, but again, that does not preclude any institutions from performing your own analyses based on the publicly available information. So, we feel as though the tool makes it much easier. But, again, if you have reasons to believe the data is incomplete or disputed, you can conduct your own independent analysis and submit that and we will definitely review that as part of the application process.

1:24:32
I encourage you to reach out to us beforehand. And perhaps if we find out that there are some limitations or flaws that are uncovered, we'll have time to address that before those applications.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:24:48
Excellent, thank you. Important information. I think we have time for at least one more question, maybe we can squeeze in two.

1:24:57
Next question: can funds be used to expand broadband capacity for university offices that are off campus? For example, a HBCU – their land grant institution, such as an 1890 institution, they have cooperative extension offices in many counties that serve citizens in rural communities throughout the state. Can funds be used to scale up broadband capacity for those offices?

Scott Woods:

1:25:22
Yeah, that's a good question. We want to see that. I mean, again, we're limited by statutory authorization to that 15-mile anchor community boundary.

1:25:30
But I know certain land grant, their satellite or off campus institutions, are connected on an otherwise joint network. So, if you are improving, you know, the base campus's connectivity, in fact, you are improving connectivity flow throughout the network. I would say, if that's the case, let us look at that. You know, schedule time with us, so we can look at it,

you have to run it through our legal department, or run it through the grants legal department as well. We can get you a clear answer on that. So, you know, again, we're talking hypotheticals here, but we are available for outreach for pre-application technical assistance. So by all means, please take advantage of that and give us a call, and we'll schedule time to review your proposal, or what you propose, or your ideas with you.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:26:21
Thank you very much. I think we can squeeze in one more question.

Scott Woods:

1:26:26
The last one that we'll do for this webinar. I am from Northern Mariana College and our educational institution does not have any data. Can we still apply? Not quite sure what they mean by data – it is located in the Mariana Islands.

I think I covered that today in the demo. We do understand that it does not have some of the U.S territories and free association, free compact island locations. They do not have American Community Survey data, that Census Bureau data that were using it as part of the CMC program. Again, contact us.

1:27:12
Let's see what data that you do have. Again, those institutions are indicated visually in the CMC Dashboard application, but let's schedule some time and walk-through what data that you do have. I'm not in a position to say that you can apply. I want to do some more research and give you information because we are, you know, again, want as many schools that are eligible to be able to apply the CMC Program.

Gilbert Resendez:

1:27:43
Thank you very much, Scott. Thank you to Kevin and Ming also for joining us today on our webinar for the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program and for Tim Moyer for his presentation on our new Indicators of Broadband Need map. That concludes our Q&A session of today's webinar. I think we have a few slides left to close out our presentation.

1:28:06
Thank you for bringing us up, and thank you to everyone for attending our webinar today on the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. I believe earlier at the top of the Q&A session, I said that the slides for the presentation. a recording, and a transcript will be available August 4th. I did misspeak. They will be available and posted to the BroadbandUSA website on August 5th. But my apologies for the confusion.

1:28:34
That material will be posted on August 5th on the BroadbandUSA website under Past Events so please keep an eye out to see that information on the website.

1:28:45
Again, we have information on the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program on the BroadbandUSA website as well as all three grant programs that were authorized under the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021*.

1:28:57
If you have any questions about the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program, you can email Scott Woods or Kevin Hughes. We've provided Scott's email there. You can also email Francine Alkiswani, who was introduced on this call and not on the Q&A session. Her email is there.

1:29:16
You can always send an email to BroadbandUSA@NTIA.doc.gov. In the presentation, we've also posted links to the indicators of broadband need map and Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Dashboard.

1:29:34
Next slide, please.

1:29:37
And then finally, we have posted all of our previously recorded webinars for this webinar series on the programs, under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, to the BroadbandUSA website under Past Events. We will also have a few more webinars for the Broadband Infrastructure Program: we have two more webinars [on] August 4th & 5th.

1:29:58
We have a couple more webinars about two weeks' worth of webinars for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. And then, we'll be running webinars for the Connecting Minority Community Pilot Program through October. So, please, keep your eyes and email inboxes open for more information to come. Thank you again to our speakers and to our three panelists who stayed for Q&A.

Scott Woods:

1:30:21
Register for the 18th!

Gilbert Resendez:

1:30:24
Yes. Register for the 18th.

1:30:32
Thank you. Thank you, everyone.

END TRANSCRIPT.