THE ENABLING MIDDLE MILE BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE (MM) PROGRAM

FUNDED BY THE BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW

ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE'S NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION

MAY 2022

"We'll make sure every single, every single, American has access to high-quality, affordable, high-speed Internet," Biden said during his speech. "When I say affordable, I mean it. Americans pay too much for Internet service. We're going to drive down the price for families who have service now and make it easier for families who don't have affordable service to be able to get it now."

-PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

We're bringing affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet to everyone in America because you need a connection to stay connected

America runs on high-speed Internet.

A strong Internet connection powers our economy and supports education. It fosters better public health. And, it connects loved ones and strengthens social ties.

But not everyone is connected. Too many Americans are cut off from the opportunities that high-speed Internet makes possible.

That's why we're working to bring high-speed Internet to all Americans.

Goal is to build infrastructure that provides reliable high-speed Internet **access** to all Americans **for today and tomorrow…**

...with a focus on making high-speed Internet **affordable** and **reliable** so **everyone** can participate in the economy...

... and providing the resources needed to **equitably** expand the adoption and use of the Internet so **everyone** can experience the benefits.

High-speed Internet helps individuals and our country

Maximizing savings for education
The Internet is not a luxury, it's a necessity. Students are asked to utilize Internet to complete homework assignments, do research, apply to college or trade schools. Students who don't have access in their home are left out and left behind.

Stimulating growth in the economy
By connecting the workplace, we can better connect businesses to consumers. And new markets can increase sales and create jobs. High-speed Internet helps American businesses compete for talent and business in the global marketplace.

Lowering costs for health
Telehealth reduces hospital visits and cuts down hospital stay time. Hospitals with high-speed Internet save money because they have lower administration costs. And by offering telehealth, they save money while improving patient health.

Strengthening ties in our community
High-speed Internet connects us to services we need. It helps first responders save lives. It lets us connect with our elected officials. And it strengthens our ties to our neighbors. One in four Americans get online alerts about local issues. And one in five use digital tools to stay in touch with their community.

Today's webinar will focus on the Middle Mile Program – one of four high-speed Internet programs administered by NTIA

BEAD

$42.45B

Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program

A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it to and increase adoption of high-speed Internet.

DIGITAL EQUITY

$2.75B

Digital Equity Act

Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed Internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.

TRIBAL

$2.00B

Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments

A program to help tribal communities expand high-speed Internet access and adoption on tribal lands.

Today's focus

MIDDLE MILE

$1.00B

Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure

A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.

Note: Funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

Middle Mile Grant Program will invest in the construction, improvement or acquisition of middle mile infrastructure

Funding pool
$1.00B

A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Middle mile infrastructure refers to the mid-section of Internet infrastructure that carries large amounts of data at high speeds over long distances and connects the "backbone" of Internet infrastructure to the "last mile", which connects to end users

Entities eligible to apply include a wide variety of entities, incl. but not limited to government entities, utilities, companies, and non-profits that provide Internet services

Example uses of funds:

- ✪ Construction, improvement or acquisition of facilities and equipment
- ✪ Engineering design, permitting and work related to projects
- ✪ Personnel costs, including salaries and benefits
- ✪ Other costs necessary to program's activities

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified
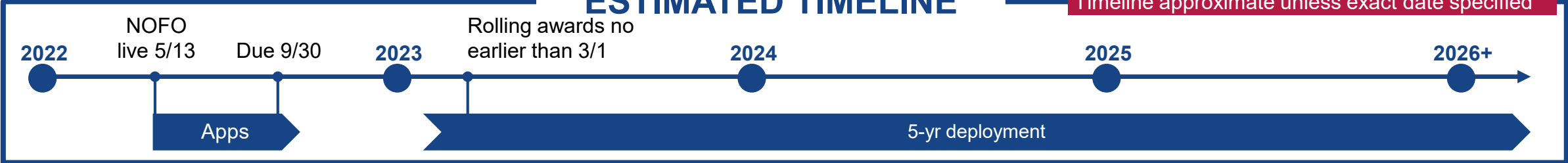
2022 — NOFO live 5/13 — Due 9/30 — 2023 — Rolling awards no earlier than 3/1 — 2024 — 2025 — 2026+

Apps

5-yr deployment

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Middle mile infrastructure broadly means the mid-section of Internet infrastructure

Middle mile infrastructure carries large amounts of data at high speeds over long distances

Middle mile infrastructure 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

Middle mile infrastructure connects the "backbone" of Internet infrastructure to the "last mile"
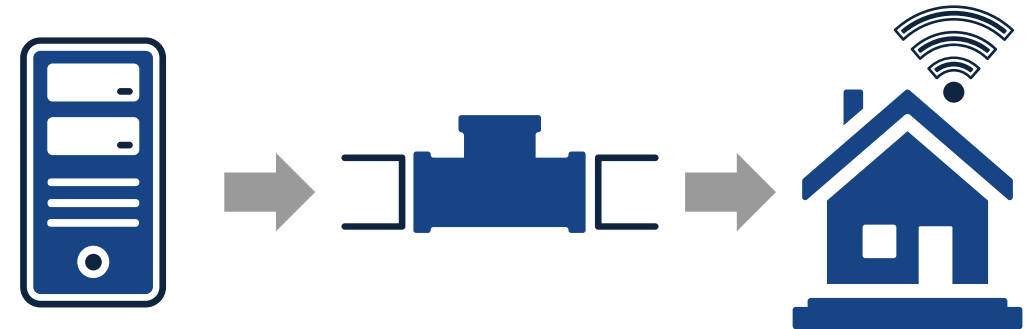
Backbone / core
Data enters the network and/or moves between servers

Middle mile
Mid-section that carries data at high speeds over long distances

Last mile
Final section that connects to an end user location

Middle Mile funding is available to variety of entities and partnerships

The term "eligible entity" means:

Government:
- State, political subdivision of a State, Tribal/Native government
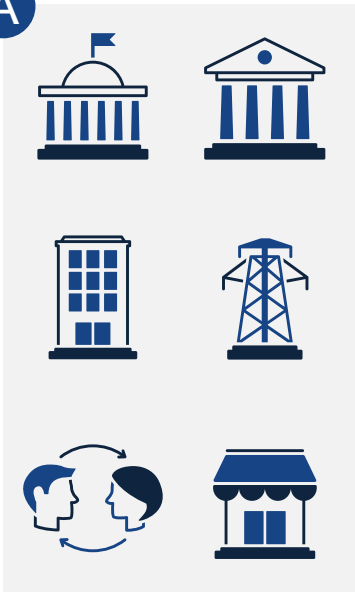
Industry:
- Tech company, electric utility, utility coop, public utility district, telecom company/coop

Non-profits and other associations:
- Non-profit foundation/corporation/institution/association, regional planning council, Native entity, or economic development authority

A

B

A partnership of two or more entities described in (A)

NTIA will grant up to $980M through $5-100M grants

Funding availability

NTIA will make up to **$980M** available for federal assistance under the middle mile grants program

Award amount

NTIA expects to make awards under this program within the following funding range: **$5M to $100M**

This range is not a required minimum or maximum, but eligible entities requesting amounts for projects outside of this range must provide a reasonable explanation for the variance in their project size

Grants can be used for the construction, improvement, or acquisition of middle mile infrastructure

Non-exhaustive examples of eligible uses of funds:

- Construction, improvement, and/or acquisition of facilities and telecommunications equipment

- Engineering design, permitting and work related to environmental, historical and cultural reviews

- Personnel costs, including salaries and fringe benefits for staff and consultants (e.g., project managers, subject matter experts, financial analysts, accountants, attorneys)

- Select pre-application expenses <$50,000 incurred after NOFO publication and before grant award

- Other costs necessary to programmatic activities, excluding ineligible costs

The Middle Mile Program will fund project that progress several priorities

Select priorities considered during project prioritization and selection (non-exhaustive):

Unserved or underserved areas
- Deploy infrastructure to help connect to unserved or underserved areas

Affordability
- Improve affordability of high-speed Internet services in existing markets

Geographic diversity
- Ensure projects benefit communities across the US

Priority communities
- Benefits remote areas, high poverty areas, Tribal communities, etc.

Open access
- Allow other Internet providers to use funded infrastructure with reasonable conditions

Resiliency
- Provide redundancy to improve the resiliency of Internet infrastructure

Shovel ready
- Complete projects in less than two-years to accelerate impact

Fiscal sustainability
- Ensure project is fiscally sustainable beyond the award period

Middle Mile projects must be completed and operating no later than five years from when the award is made

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6

Award processing by 2/16 and award start date no earlier than 3/1

40% of project miles complete

60% of project miles complete

80% of project miles complete

100% of project miles complete

Potential **1-year extension** to buildout deadline based on qualifying circumstances
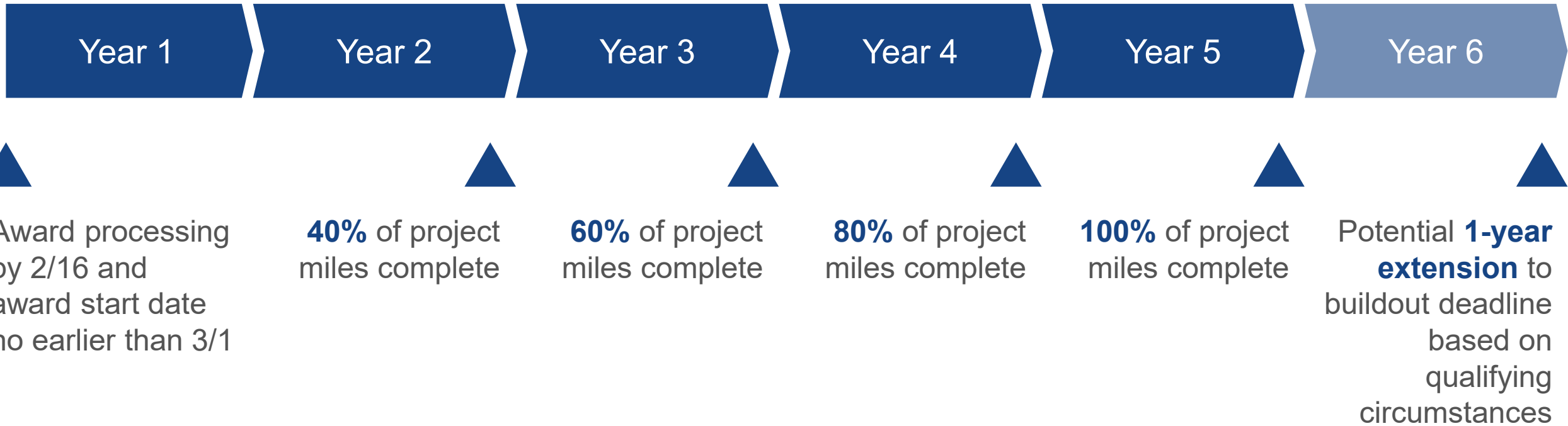
Middle Mile program will support broadband access, affordability, and adoption across all Americans

Access

Aggregates large quantities of traffic **between points to improve access**, enabling future investment in infrastructure to reach the end user's location

Carries traffic to **remote, unserved, or underserved locations** such as Hawaii or American territories, unserved Tribal / Native lands, or simply a neighboring town

Affordability

Reduces the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas **expanding and extending infrastructure** to carry large amounts of data to the backbone of the Internet

Unlocks future opportunities for providers to offer cost-effective **last-mile services**
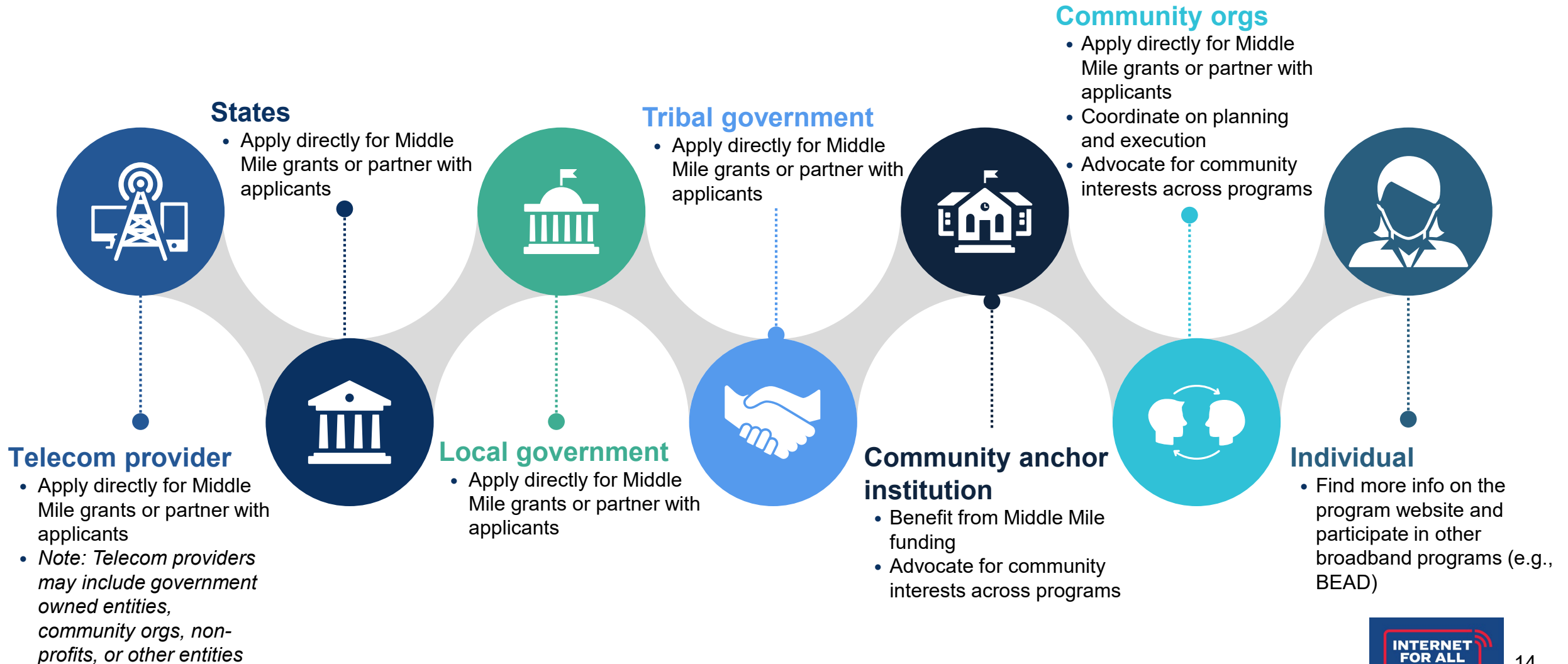
Adoption and equity

Funds projects in **diverse geographies** and **priority communities**, such as unserved, underserved, remote and high poverty areas

Builds middle mile infrastructure to **connect to last mile services**, including where there are community or anchor tenant commitments to adopt services

Every stakeholder plays a role in the Middle Mile program

Illustrative, non-exhaustive

Community orgs
- Apply directly for Middle Mile grants or partner with applicants
- Coordinate on planning and execution
- Advocate for community interests across programs

States
- Apply directly for Middle Mile grants or partner with applicants

Tribal government
- Apply directly for Middle Mile grants or partner with applicants

Telecom provider
- Apply directly for Middle Mile grants or partner with applicants
- *Note: Telecom providers may include government owned entities, community orgs, non-profits, or other entities*

Local government
- Apply directly for Middle Mile grants or partner with applicants

Community anchor institution
- Benefit from Middle Mile funding
- Advocate for community interests across programs

Individual
- Find more info on the program website and participate in other broadband programs (e.g., BEAD)

Additional resources about the Middle Mile Program

1. Visit the InternetForAll.gov for additional information on federal funding programs

2. Engage with your State or territory regarding their plans to improve high-speed Internet access

3. Submit questions to middlemile@ntia.gov

4. Attend future NTIA webinars, including program-specific application guidance webinars for applicants