



THE ENABLING MIDDLE MILE BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions



Today's webinar will focus on the Middle Mile Grant 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.



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

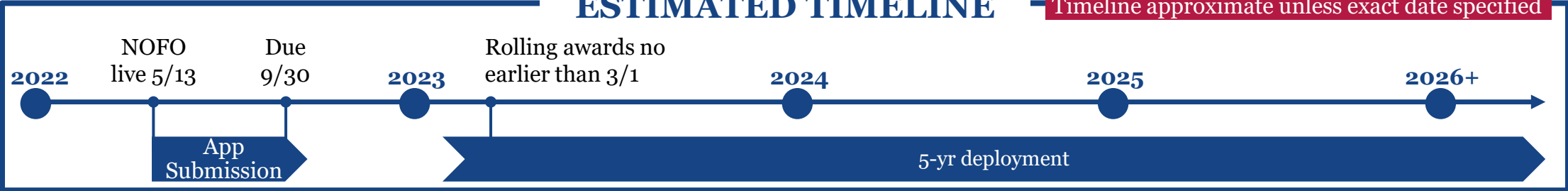
Entities eligible to apply include a wide variety of entities, incl. but not limited to government entities, Native entities, utilities, companies, and non-profits that provide Internet services

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



NTIA will only accept applications submitted electronically via its online grants' portal by September 30, 2022



NTIA Grants Portal

Applications must be received through the NTIA Grants Portal no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on Sept. 30, 2022

Please contact middlemile@ntia.gov with any questions and ngphelpdesk@ntia.gov for technical support with the portal



Application format requirements

- Figures, graphs, images, and pictures should be readable and may be presented in landscape
- Font should be easy to read and 11-point minimum; figures and tables may use smaller type
- One-inch margins on top, bottom, left, and right
- Portrait orientation except for figures, graphs, images, and pictures
- Page size 8 1/2 by 11 inches
- All applications must be typed in English



Today's webinar will focus on the Top Frequently Asked Questions of the Middle Mile Grant Program



Today's focus



Top Frequently Asked Questions

More Frequently Asked Questions

Clarified Questions

Outstanding Questions



Key topics covered in the Middle Mile Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions



FAQ Sections

Overview

Eligibility and Program Details

Uses of Funding

Review and Scoring Process

Application Components and Process



Overview

Questions

More Frequently Asked
Question



What is the difference between an environmental impact versus climate resilience?

Clarification



What is “open access” and how is it related to the Middle Mile Grant Program?

Outstanding FAQ



Will the Middle Mile Funds be received up front or via reimbursement?

Eligibility and Program Details



Questions

More Frequently Asked Question



What are the requirements for connections to Anchor Institutions in the Middle Mile Grant Program?

Clarification



What are in-kind contributions?

Outstanding FAQ



Can states or local governments use funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (either State Fiscal Recovery dollars or Capital Projects Fund dollars) for the Middle Mile Grant Program match?

Uses of Funding

Questions

More Frequently Asked Question



Are Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) costs eligible under the Middle Mile Grant Program?

Clarification



Would connecting to an existing end-user location, such as a Community Anchor Institution, to serve as Point of Presence qualify as an eligible expense in the Middle Mile Grant program?

Outstanding FAQ



What are the requirements for materials to be produced in the US?

Review and Scoring Process

Questions

More Frequently Asked Question



What is the Merit Review, and what criteria are assessed during Merit Review?

Clarification



What is the Programmatic Review, and what criteria are assessed during Programmatic Review?

Outstanding FAQ



How do Tribal Entities request a full or partial waiver of matching funds?

Application Components and Process

Questions

More Frequently Asked Question



Can applicants submit tax returns in lieu of audited financial statements?

Clarification



What sources will be accepted to define unserved/underserved areas?

Outstanding FAQ



Can public sector entities submit a bond in place of a letter of credit?

Applicants should pay close attention to application requirements to avoid delays in review



Common Mistakes

In previous NTIA programs, some of the most common reasons for curing included **missing or incomplete forms**.

Common curing reasons included:

- Ineligible use of funding
- Not meeting the required cost share minimum of 30%
- Funding is not sufficient to complete the task outlined in the project
- Costs are not reasonable, allowable, and allocable based on the scope of work
- A detailed narrative breakout is not provided for each cost in the Budget Narrative
- Total federal budget amounts requested in Field 18 of the SF-424 do not align to the number in the SF-424C, Budget Narrative, or Detailed Budget Justification

Best Practices

➤ Ensure that all forms are completed per the instructions in the NOFO, to include formatting requirements and **all required forms and documents have been uploaded or narrative** have been directly entered into the NTIA Grants Portal, including:

- Certification of Financial Capability
- Pre-Letter of Credit
- Audited Financial Statements
- Historical Financial Statements
- SF-424C
- Budget Narrative
- Detailed Budget Justification
- Pro Forma Financial Projection and Analysis
- Y/N: "Any other funding provided for this project?"

➤ Ensure budget is prepared in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E and 48 C.F.R. Part 31.





Additional resources about the Middle Mile Grant 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





Programmatic inquiries

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For specific inquiries, please contact the appropriate office

