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# Middle Mile Grant Program

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## Grant Recipient Orientation

Version 1.0



# Housekeeping



## Questions

- Type questions in the Q&A box on the right-hand side of the screen for the Q&A session at the end of the presentation.

## Presentation

- The presentation, along with a transcript and recording, will be available on the Internet For All website under Webinars after the session.
- <https://www.internetforall.gov/webinars>

*This presentation is for informational purposes only and is intended solely to assist grant recipients in better understanding the Middle Mile (MM) Grant Program and the requirements outlined in award terms and conditions for this program. The information included in this presentation does not supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements or the specific requirements outlined in the terms and conditions of a Middle Mile Program award. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, and the requirements outlined in the terms and conditions of a Middle Mile Program award, including the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in this guidance.*



# Agenda

- 1** Welcome
- 2** Award Management
- 3** Program Compliance Requirements
- 4** Program Reporting Requirements
- 5** Grant Monitoring & Oversight
- 6** Grant Management
- 7** Questions & Answers

# Congratulations!

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- Welcome to the Middle Mile (MM) Grant Program!
- We at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) are proud to support you as you begin expanding access to broadband in your communities.
- Stay tuned for more information on upcoming webinars.



# AWARD MANAGEMENT

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# How will my award be managed?



The NTIA has partnered with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Grants Management Division (GMD) to oversee the administration of your grant.

NTIA Middle Mile Program Federal Program Officer (FPO)	NIST GMD Grants Officer and Grants Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Monitor and oversee work conducted under an award, compare the actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives established in the award</li> <li>✓ Provide programmatic guidance and technical assistance to recipients</li> <li>✓ Review and evaluate reports, including financial and technical performance progress report (PPR) for consistency with the approved project</li> <li>✓ Ensure that each award complies with applicable statutes, regulations, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance, Executive Orders, and Department of Commerce (DOC) policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Oversee the business management and administrative aspects of grants</li> <li>✓ Approve awards and amendments</li> <li>✓ Ensure recipient's compliance with the award conditions, including Specific Award Conditions (SACs)</li> <li>✓ Review and evaluate reports, including financial and technical performance progress report (PPR) for consistency with the approved project</li> <li>✓ Ensure that each award complies with applicable statutes, regulations, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance, Executive Orders, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Grants Management Division (GMD), and DOC policies</li> </ul>



# What are my immediate actions?



## **Within 30 days, sign and return your grant award (CD-450).**

- Only your designated Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) can sign the grant award.
- Email your signed grant award to your NIST Grants Specialist and NTIA FPO.
- CC: [grantapp@ntia.gov](mailto:grantapp@ntia.gov)

## **Designate roles to individuals in your organization for effective and efficient grants management.**



# What roles do I need to designate?



- 1. Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)** – Serves as the primary administrative contact for your organization.
- 2. Project Director (PD)** – Performs administrative functions and assists the AOR with general administration of the grant.
- 3. Payment Requestor (PR)** – Submits requests to drawdown funds in the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system.

**We recommend dividing roles as much as practicable,  
but you can assign multiple roles to a single person if you choose.**





# PROGRAM COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

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# Program Compliance Requirements



**To ensure regulatory compliance, we will review the following requirements with which you must comply:**

- Allowable vs Unallowable Costs
- Records Retention Requirements
- Audit Requirements
- Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Requirements and Permitting
- Additional Compliance Requirements

**Consult the FPO listed on your grant award if you have any questions or concerns regarding any program compliance requirements.**



# Allowable Costs



**Allowable costs are determined in accordance with the cost principles identified in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, including Subpart E of such regulations for States and non-profit organizations, and in 48 C.F.R. Part 31 for commercial organizations, as well as the Infrastructure Act and Middle Mile Grant Program NOFO.**

**Costs must be allowable, reasonable, allocable and necessary for the proposed project.**

- **Allowable:** Meets the general criteria in order to be allowable under Federal awards; such as being necessary and reasonable for the performance of the Federal award ( see 2 CFR 200.403).
- **Reasonable:** Does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person at the time the decision was made to incur such cost (see 2 CFR 200.404).
- **Allocable:** Incurred either directly or indirectly to carry out the scope of work (see 2 CFR 200.405).



# Allowable/Eligible vs. Unallowable/Ineligible Costs, per the Middle Mile NOFO



## Allowable/Eligible Costs

- ✓ Construction, improvement, and/or acquisition of facilities and telecommunications equipment required to deploy middle mile broadband facilities
- ✓ **Engineering design, permitting and work related to environmental, historical and cultural reviews**
- ✓ Personnel costs, including salaries and fringe benefits for staff and consultants required for the implementation of the Middle Mile Program
- ✓ Reasonable, post-NOFO, pre-application expenses in an amount not to exceed \$50,000\*
- ✓ Other costs necessary to carrying out programmatic activities of an award, not to include ineligible costs described in Section IV.I.2 of the Middle Mile NOFO

## Unallowable/Ineligible Costs

- ✗ Purchasing or supporting any covered communications equipment or service (as defined in Section 9 of the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019 (47 U.S.C. § 1608))
- ✗ Profits, fees, or other incremental charges above actual cost incurred by an award recipient or subrecipient
- ✗ Support or opposition to union organizing
- ✗ Broadband infrastructure costs that are not necessary to complete the project that was proposed by the recipient and approved by NTIA
- ✗ Collateral for a loan made by any public or private lender
- ✗ Pre-application expenses, including previously incurred administrative costs or previously purchased equipment or construction activities, except as allowed in Section IV.I.1.d of the Middle Mile NOFO

\* Pre-application expenses, which include expenses related to preparing an application, may be reimbursed if they are incurred after the publication date of this NOFO and prior to the date of issuance of the grant award from NTIA, except that lobbying costs and contingency fees are not reimbursable from grant funds. **These costs must be approved by NTIA and the Grants Officer in writing to be considered allowable.**



# Records Retention Requirements



**Records pertinent to a Federal award must be retained for a period of three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report.** Certain exceptions to these requirements are specific in 2 C.F.R § 200.334.

## **Recipients should retain the following after closeout:**

- Award Package
- Financial Records
- Evidence of program accomplishments
- Performance and Financial Reports
- Audit follow-up records
- Monitoring records
- Written determinations and preapprovals from awarding agency
- Final closeout letter
- Record of reconciliation
- Property disposition forms



# Audit Requirements



**If you expend more than \$750,000 of federal funds in a single fiscal year:**

## **Non-Federal Entities**

- **You must submit a single audit** to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.
- Audits are conducted as either single audits or program-specific audits as requested by the Grants Officer.

## **Commercial (For Profit) Entities**

- You must submit to the Grants Officer either:
  - A **financial related audit of each DOC award or subaward** in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards; OR
  - A **project specific audit for each award or subaward** in accordance with the requirements contained in 2 C.F.R. § 200.507.

**Remember: You must retain documents for three years after award closeout.**



# EHP Requirements and Permitting



## EHP Post Award Requirements:

- EHP analysis will be required for ***all grant-funded actions***.
- Your FPO and an Environmental Program Officer (EPO) will provide guidance and assistance to help you understand how to meet your compliance obligations.
- In coordination with NTIA, you will need to identify other federal agencies that may be impacted as early as possible, and develop and deliver an assessment of potential environmental impacts. NTIA will determine which level of NEPA analysis is required. The three levels of NEPA analysis are:
  - **Categorical Exclusion (CE)** - Issued for defined actions that the agency has determined do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the environment.
  - **Environmental Assessment (EA)** - Prepared for actions in which the significance of the environmental impact is not clearly established. Should environmental analysis find a project to have no significant impacts on the quality of the environment, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is issued.
  - **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** - Prepared for projects when the action will likely have a significant effect on the environment. This is the most comprehensive form of NEPA analysis. The final decision is documented in a Record of Decision (ROD), which codifies the final decision made, whether to approve the project or not, and the basis for that decision.
- **NTIA anticipates that most Middle Mile Grant Program recipients will require Environmental Assessments**, and strongly recommends that grant recipients engage the services of a qualified consultant to develop the analysis.

**Further training on EHP requirements and permitting will be provided.**



# EHP Consultations and Permitting



Applicants are responsible for conducting all necessary consultations and permitting, at the CATEX, EA, and EIS level, as applicable.

Federal	State	Regional & Local
<p>Depending upon the impact to resources, federal permits and approvals could be required including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>US Army Corps of Engineers Section 10/404 – Impacts to wetlands and waterways of the US</li> <li>State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) - Section 106 consultation</li> <li>US Coastal Zone Management - For project located within the Coastal Zone prepare a Consistency Review</li> <li>US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Section 7 Consultation</li> <li>Hazardous Materials storage and transport (federal requirements for storage, marking, labeling under OSHA, and transportation under DOT)</li> <li>Hazardous Waste – compliance with EPA 40 CFR requirements for generation, transport and disposal</li> </ul>	<p>States have varying permitting requirements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Environmental Quality or Protection Programs (EX: CEQA, MEPA, TCEQ)</li> <li>Stormwater</li> <li>Wetlands and Land Disturbing Permits</li> <li>Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) (federal requirement but must apply to a state level)</li> <li>Hazardous Materials storage and transport (federal and state requirements may apply)</li> </ul>	<p>Regional and Local Entities have permitting and approval processes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Planning organizations</li> <li>Local Noise and Idling ordinance</li> </ul>
<p>Applicants are responsible for identifying and obtaining applicable Federal, State and Local permits required to conduct their project; not all permits need to be done for the NEPA process to conclude.</p>		

**IF CONSULTED PARTY(IES) REQUEST TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH NTIA, NTIA WILL SUPPORT REQUIRED CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES.**





# 6-Month Expenditure Plans



**Recipients shall submit to their FPO, in advance of any drawdown of funds from ASAP, an initial 6-month expenditure plan that presents the proposed planning and design activities and limited, preliminary procurement activities and costs.**

*Note: Recipients need to receive approval of their 6-month expenditure plan before the draw down of any funds from ASAP*

**Allowable use of award funds** prior to beginning project implementation includes, but is not limited to, activities necessary for the completion of the following:

- ✓ Pre-construction project planning, including collecting environmentally-related information;
- ✓ Applications for environmental permits;
- ✓ Studies such as an Environmental Assessment (EA), and any wetland delineations, biological assessments, archaeological surveys, or other required analyses;
- ✓ Administrative costs;
- ✓ Pre-award application costs if approved by NTIA and the Grants Officer in writing; and/or
- ✓ Required consultation activities.

**Preliminary procurements** prior to beginning project implementation includes, but is not limited to, the initiation of activities necessary to meet the project completion requirements as specified in the award, including the following:

- ✓ Purchase or lease of equipment, or entering into binding contracts to do so;
- ✓ Purchase of applicable or conditional insurance; and/or
- ✓ Funds used to secure land or building leases, including right-of-way easements.



# Additional Requirements



## **Property Trust Relationship and Public Notice Filings for Grant-Acquired Property**

- Real property, equipment, and intangible property acquired or improved with a federal award must be held in trust by the recipient or subrecipient as trustee for the beneficiaries of the project or program under which the property was acquired or improved.
- See 2 C.F.R. § 200.316

## **Domestic Preference for Procurements\* (Build America, Buy America)**

- All funds made available through the Middle Mile Program for broadband infrastructure must comply with the Build America, Buy America Act
- Iron, steel, manufactured products (including but not limited to fiber-optic communications facilities), and construction materials used in the project or other eligible activities are produced in the United States unless a waiver is granted.
- See Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-22-11 (dated April 18, 2022) for waiver guidance.

## **Contracting with Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Firms**

- Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.321, any eligible entity that receives an award must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.

\* NTIA is working with the Made in America office to obtain a BABA waiver for the Middle Mile program and will update recipients with information as it is available.



# PROGRAM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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# Reporting Requirements - Financial



You are required to submit financial reports in accordance with the following schedule:

REPORT	REPORTING PERIOD	DUE DATES	FORM	SUBMIT TO
<b>Bi-Annual Financial Report</b>	October 1 – March 31 April 1 – September 30	Every April 30 Every October 30	Federal Financial Report SF-425 available at <a href="https://www.grants.gov/">https://www.grants.gov/</a>	Submit via <a href="#">NTIA Grants Portal</a>
<b>Final Financial Report</b>	Period of Performance	120 days after the end of the project period		



# Reporting Requirements - Performance



You are required to submit performance reports in accordance with the following schedule

REPORT	REPORTING PERIOD	DUE DATES	FORM	SUBMIT TO
<b>Bi-Annual Technical Performance Progress Report (PPR)</b>	October 1 – March 31 April 1 – September 30	Every April 30 Every October 30	Bi-Annual Technical Performance Progress Report form is currently under review by OMB. A draft version is available for comment on the Federal Register here: <a href="#">Draft Form</a>	Submit via <a href="#">NTIA Grants Portal</a>
<b>Final Technical Performance Progress Report (PPR)</b>	Period of Performance	120 days after the end of the project period		

**Performance reporting will be used to capture a clear picture of progress of individual projects and the Middle Mile Program overall.**



# Assistance with Reporting

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## **We are here to help!**

- We will provide deeper dive sessions and/or documentation to walk through how to complete financial reports and technical/programmatic performance reports.
- Performance (Technical) Report templates and guidance are forthcoming.
- If you have questions about Performance (Technical) reporting, please contact your FPO.
- If you have questions about Federal Financial reporting, please contact your Grants Specialist.



**GRANT MONITORING,  
OVERSIGHT, AND TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE**

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# Grant Monitoring and Oversight



NTIA and the NIST GMD will monitor your grant award to ensure compliance with Federal regulations and grant terms to avoid and correct any potential issues. Here's a quick glance at what's involved:

- Monitoring and oversight of awards may be in the form of **site visits** or **desk reviews**. Monitoring is not an audit!
- Monitoring will occur on a regular basis, and you will be notified in advance of any site visits.
- The types of activities that may be reviewed during a site visit or desk review are:
  - Organizational structure and governance
  - Contracts, subrecipient, and procurement policies
  - Financial management policies and procedures
  - Programmatic activities

**Stay tuned – we will provide deeper dive sessions and/or documentation on monitoring.**





# Technical Assistance



NTIA will provide technical assistance (TA) to grant recipients to equip them with tools and information to help you successfully execute your Middle Mile grant-funded initiatives. Sample topics for TA workshops:

- Environmental assessment requirements
- Regulatory permitting
- Construction planning and implementation
- Equipment and instrumentation
- Reporting

Technical Assistance may take the form of:

- pre-recorded webinars
- live webinars
- topic-driven office hours

**Middle Mile Grant Recipients will receive information about program specific TA in addition to general sessions applicable to multiple NTIA Grant Programs**



# GRANT MANAGEMENT

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# How will I manage my grant?



NIST's Grants Management Division manages administration of the Middle Mile program grant activities.

NIST Grants Officers and Grants Specialists will be able to assist you with:

- Accepting and amending your award.
- Requesting changes to your award, known as Unfunded Grant Actions (UGAs).
- Submitting and uploading reports and documents.

**You will use the U.S. Department of Treasury's  
Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)  
system to draw down funds.**



# Unfunded Grant Actions



If you would like to request changes to your award, it is important that you first contact your FPO to discuss (via phone or email). Upon gaining approval to submit, you should work with your NIST Grant Specialist to process your UGA. *Note: UGA requests should be sent to [UGAM@nist.gov](mailto:UGAM@nist.gov).*

What are some the types of UGAs that I can request?

- Changes in scope
- Budget revisions (no additional funds requested)
- No-cost extensions
- Changes in key personnel and PD
- Add Subrecipients



# How do I drawdown funds in ASAP?



**First, ensure that you have an account set up in ASAP.**

## How do I set up my ASAP account?

- Contact the ASAP Help Desk to enroll
  - 1-855-868-0151 or;
  - [asaphelpdesk@fiscal.treasury.gov](mailto:asaphelpdesk@fiscal.treasury.gov)
- Ensure that you have your EIN and UEI number
- Ensure that your bank accounts are properly linked to your ASAP account

ASAP.gov


SINGLE SIGNON

Forgot Password | Change Password | Forgot User ID | Contact

By logging in with **PIV or User ID/Password**, you acknowledge that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by the [Rules of Behavior](#)

**PIV Card or iKey** ?

Please make sure your card/iKey is plugged into the reader



LOGIN WITH YOUR PIV

**User ID & Password** ?

User ID

Password

LOGIN

Or



# How do I drawdown funds in ASAP?



**The Payment Requestor designated by your organization must submit the requests for payment.**

## **Steps to Request a payment:**

1. Login to your ASAP account
2. Select **Initiate a Payment Request**
3. Enter the **Requestor ID** assigned to the Payment Requestor of your ASAP account
4. Specify the criteria for the award funds from which you're drawing
  - a. **Recipient ID** – assigned to your Recipient Organization or the Payment Requestor in ASAP
  - b. **Account ID** – ASAP account that has been set up by the federal program agency
  - c. **Agency Locator Code** – choose the correct code for your agency (NTIA)
5. Specify the payment information:
  - a. **Payment Request Type** (Individual or Summary)
  - b. **Payment Method** (ACH or Fedwire)
  - c. **Requested Settlement Date** (will depend upon the Payment Method selected)
6. Enter Amount Requested
7. Review and Confirm Transaction



**You will request funds in ASAP by advance payment or reimbursement per the terms of your award to pay for allowable grant costs.**

- **Advance payments** must be timed to limit excess cash-on-hand (no more than 30 days).
- Funds drawn in advance must be kept in an interest-bearing account in accordance with the requirements contained in 2 C.F.R. 200.305(b)(8).
- Interest accrued in excess of \$500 per calendar year must be returned.
- **Reimbursement** is the method when the requirements of 2 C.F.R. 200.305(b) cannot be met, when the Federal awarding agency sets a specific condition per § 200.208, or when the non-Federal entity requests payment by reimbursement.
- Contact a Grants Specialist if you identify a cash error and need to return funds.

# We're here to help!



- NTIA and our partners at NIST are committed to providing excellent service to you as you begin the process of expanding and extending middle mile infrastructure to reduce the cost of connecting areas that are unserved or underserved to the Internet backbone.
- We dedicate ourselves to ensuring that the Middle Mile program operates as efficiently as possible.
- Be sure to contact your NTIA FPO or your NIST Grants Specialist if you have any questions about your award.

**Congratulations on your award and welcome to the Middle Mile Grant Program!**





# Key Program Contacts



Topic	Contact Information
Submission of required grant documents	Assigned Federal Program Officer designated on your award documents
Assistance with required grant documents and/or day-to-day activities	Sarah Bleau, Director of Middle Mile <a href="mailto:SBleau@ntia.gov">SBleau@ntia.gov</a> ; or Assigned Federal Program Officer designated on your award documents
Assistance with grants management and/or compliance	Assigned Grants Specialist designated on your award documents or Andrew Rittgers, NIST Grants Officer <a href="mailto:Andrew.Rittgers@nist.gov">Andrew.Rittgers@nist.gov</a>
Media inquiries	Charles Meisch, Director of Public Affairs, NTIA <a href="mailto:press@NTIA.gov">press@NTIA.gov</a>
General feedback, comments, concerns	<a href="mailto:grantaward@ntia.gov">grantaward@ntia.gov</a>



# Useful Resources



Website	URL
<a href="#">Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program website</a>	<a href="https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/federal/federal-funding/department-commerce-enabling-middle-mile-broadband-infrastructure">https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/resources/federal/federal-funding/department-commerce-enabling-middle-mile-broadband-infrastructure</a>
<a href="#">Notice of Funding Opportunity</a>	<a href="https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/MIDDLE%20MILE%20NOFO.pdf">https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/MIDDLE%20MILE%20NOFO.pdf</a>
<a href="#">NIST Grants Management Division</a>	<a href="https://www.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division">https://www.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division</a>
<a href="#">Grants.gov Post-Award Forms and Instructions</a>	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html</a>
<a href="#">DOC Standard Terms and Conditions</a>	<a href="https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%202012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf">https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/DOC%20Standard%20Terms%20and%20Conditions%20-%202012%20November%202020%20PDF_0.pdf</a>



**QUESTION / ANSWER**

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# Acronyms and Key Terms



## Acronyms

- **AOR** – Authorized Organization Representative
- **ASAP** – Automated Standard Application for Payments
- **FFR** – Federal Financial Report
- **FPO** – Federal Program Officer
- **GO** – Grants Officer
- **GS** – Grants Specialist
- **MM** – Middle Mile Grant Program
- **NGP** – NTIA Grants Portal
- **NOFO** – Notice of Funding Opportunity
- **PI/PD** – Principal Investigator/Project Director
- **PPR** – Performance Technical Progress Report
- **PR** – Payment Requestor
- **RAR** – Recipient Authorized Representative
- **UGA** – Unfunded Grant Action

## Key Terms

- **Auditing:** Ensuring compliance with government regulations and evaluating financial information, including expenses paid for with Federal award funds.
- **Monitoring:** Ensuring compliance with Federal regulations and grant terms to avoid and correct any potential issues.
- **No-Cost Extensions:** Extend the project period without adding additional funding.



# Thank You!

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**Thank you for attending. We appreciate your support in expanding access to and adoption of broadband services in your communities.**

The slides will be sent to you via email following the training session.





**THANK YOU**

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