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# Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program: Application Guidance and Eligible Activities

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October 2023



# Housekeeping

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## Questions

- Type questions in the Q&A box on the right-hand side of the screen. Questions and answers will be available on the FAQ section of our website
- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

## Presentation

- The presentation along with a transcript and recording will be available on the BroadbandUSA website under Events/Past Event
- [Round Two Notice of Funding Opportunity | BroadbandUSA \(doc.gov\)](#)

*This presentation is for informational purposes only and is intended solely to assist applicants in better understanding the NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, and the requirements set forth in the program's second Notice of Funding Opportunity (Second TBCP NOFO). This presentation does not and is not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, or the specific application requirements set forth in the Second TBCP NOFO. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates and the requirements set forth in the Second TBCP NOFO shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in this presentation.*



# Presenters

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## **Presenters:**

- Rebecca Seewald, Federal Program Officer

## **Moderator:**

- Isabel Lopez, Federal Program Officer, Team Lead

## **Panelists:**

- Vanessa Cresci, Federal Program Officer
- Stephanie Henning, Federal Program Officer
- Nicholas Courtney, Federal Program Officer, Team Lead



# Agenda

- 1** Eligible Entities
- 2** Required Documents
- 3** Project Narrative Guidance
- 4** Required Documents for Infrastructure Deployment Projects
- 5** Eligible Activities
- 6** Q & A

# Eligible Entities

# Tribal Grant Program | Eligible Entities

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Section 905(a)(8) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Act), codified at 47 U.S.C. 1705(a)(8), defines the following as eligible entities:

- Tribal Governments;
- Tribal Colleges or Universities;
- The Department of Hawaiian Homelands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, including Native Hawaiian education programs;
- Tribal organizations; or
- Native corporations as defined under Section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Eligible Entities that previously received Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program grant funding may apply for additional grant funding pursuant to the NOFO.



# Guidance for Consortium Applicants

Eligible Entities applying on behalf of two or more Tribal Governments must:

- Include a Resolution of Consent from all participating governments
- Ensure that Tribal Governments named in their application are included in only one TBCP application

## **IMPORTANT NOTE**

Eligible Entities may only be part of one application. If NTIA determines that an Eligible Entity is participating in multiple applications, this may significantly delay NTIA's review of such applications and may result in NTIA removing that entity from consideration for funding for both their individual application and any consortium applications they are a party to



# Required Documents



# Required Forms – All Applications

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All applicants must submit the following forms:

- SF-424
- CD-511
- Standard Form LLL
- TBCP2 Project Information Form
- Certification Regarding Compliance with Cyber Security and Supply Chain Management Requirements

For projects proposing both Use and Adoption and Infrastructure Deployment activities, the above forms must be completed using the total requested funding amount



# Project Information Form

Field Name	Response	Instructions
<b>Applicant Information</b>		
Applicant Name		Provide the name of your Eligible Entity
Applicant Type (Eligible Entities drop down)		Tribal Government; Tribal College or University; the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, including Native Hawaiian Education Programs; Tribal organization; or <u>Native Corporation</u>
Consortium Applicant (Y/N)		Are you applying on behalf of a consortium of federally recognized tribes?  Please note that the application requests that the consortium application submission should contain authorized Tribal Resolutions attesting to participation in the Consortium project.
Applicant Tribe(s)		Please list the participating tribes as provided in the Listing of Entities Recognized by and Eligible To Receive Services From the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs ( <a href="#">87 FR 4636-4641</a> )
UEI		Enter the organization's UEI received from SAM. The UEI is a unique 12 character organization identifier. Information on registering with System for Award Management (SAM.gov) may be obtained by visiting the SAM.gov home page <a href="https://sam.gov/content/home">https://sam.gov/content/home</a>
Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) Name		Name of the authorized representative of the applicant organization. Enter the first and last name (required); prefix, middle name, and suffix. <u>A copy of the governing body's authorization recognizing the official representative must be on file in the applicant's office.</u> (NTIA also requires that this authorization be submitted as part of the application.)

# Project Narrative Guidelines

# Project Narrative

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All Project Narratives can be a maximum of 20 single spaced (40 double spaced) pages and must contain:

- An executive summary of the proposal, not to exceed 2 pages
- An explanation of how the applicant meets the definition of an eligible entity as defined in Section A.3.j of the NOFO

Applicants must also include the following information, which does not count towards the page limits:

- A table of all funded and unfunded project participants and collaborators
- Up to five one-page resumes of key personnel



# Example Table of Funded Participants and Unfunded Collaborators

Organization	Administrative Role	Scope of Work	Funding Amount
A Tribe Called Quest, 1313 Mockingbird Lane Washington, DC 12345	Applicant	Grant Oversight and administration	\$35,000
Dr. Seuss Regional Library, 221B Baker St. Washington, DC 12345	Subrecipient	Digital Literacy training	\$50,000
Acme Corp. 42 Wallaby Way Los Angeles, CA 90210	Contractor	Fiber Deployment and construction management	\$2,000,000
TBD	Contractor	Environmental assessments	\$200,000
Hogwarts School District 4 Privet Drive Washington, DC 12345	Unfunded Collaborator	Community engagement and digital literacy training	NA



# Project Narrative - Use and Adoption (UA)

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All Use and Adoption Project Narratives must contain the following sections:

Community  
Needs,  
Problems, and  
Challenges

Project Purpose  
and Benefits

Project  
Objectives

Project Plan and  
Timeline



# UA: Community Needs & Project Purpose and Benefits

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- Description of the community needs, problems, or challenges that the project will address
- Description of the project's beneficiaries and service area, including relevant demographic information
- The specific activities to be funded by the grant and the eligible uses of the funding
- If an applicant includes a Tribal government which did not receive previous TBCP funding, include a description of proposed activities to be funded if they were only to receive equitable distribution funding of up to \$500,000
- If the total Use and Adoption request is above \$2,500,000, applicants must provide a justification for the size and scope of their project



# UA: Project Objectives

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Applicants must provide a detailed description of the project objectives and outcomes related to the Eligible Activities as described in the NOFO. The following must also be included for specific project activities:

- Projects with digital inclusion efforts must include a description of any digital inclusion planning activities and proposed deliverables, including identification of barriers to equity and objectives for overcoming them
- Projects with affordable broadband programs must include a price comparison of the proposed service to comparable services, as well as price predictions and plans for price evaluation/adjustment for a period of up to 5 years. Applicants must also describe any plans to increase affordability of broadband service on Tribal Lands, including through increased enrollment in the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program
- Proposals which include workforce development should describe plans to prioritize the hiring of local workers and recruit historically underrepresented populations facing labor market barriers





# UA: Project Plan

Applicants must include a project plan that includes:

- Timelines for implementation of all major project activities
  - Key milestones
  - Must include start & end dates for each major project activity
- A description of how progress will be tracked
- A description of the projects' outcomes and performance measures
  - including metrics, planned data collection, and/or evaluation methodologies
- A list of planned products (curricula, guides, publications, etc.) resulting from your project, as well as how any benefits will be sustained after the end of the funding period

## **Human Subject Research**

Applicants should consult [TBCP's Human Subject Research \(HSR\) guidance](#) to ensure that any planned evaluation does not meet the definition of HSR



# Example Project Plan

Major Milestones (Y/N)	Project Objectives & Activities	Evaluation Criteria	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4			
			Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
Y	Environmental Review	Call w/THPO & Environmental Consultant; begin NEPA process		X														
N	Identify Architect/Engineer	Follow entity Procurement Policy for RFP		X														
N	Begin search for Construction Company	Follow entity Procurement Policy			x													



# Project Narrative - Infrastructure Deployment (ID)

All Infrastructure Deployment Project Narratives must contain the following sections:

**Descriptions of the  
Activities to be  
Funded by the Grant**

**Project Purpose and  
Benefits**

**Job Creation and  
Labor Standards**

**Broadband Speed  
Tiers and Affordable  
Pricing**

**Climate Resiliency**

**Project Plan**

**Sustainability**

**Description of the  
Physical Project  
Area, and its  
Surroundings**



# ID: Description of Activities

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- Applicants should include a description of the specific activities to be funded by the grant and the eligible uses of the funding, including any last or middle mile technologies, description of the service area, and proposed population to be served
- Any proposed project must be comprehensive and autonomous. Applications relying on future funding or adjacent projects not currently under construction will not be considered
- If an applicant includes a Tribal government which did not receive previous TBCP funding, include a description of proposed activities to be funded if they were only to receive equitable distribution funding of up to \$500,000
- If the total Infrastructure Deployment request is above \$50,000,000, applicants must provide a justification for the size and scope of their project



# ID: Project Purpose and Benefits

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As a part of the Project Purpose and Benefits Section, applicants must include the following information in their application for the proposed service area:

- Total number of Tribal households
- Number of Unserved Tribal Households
- Number of Unserved Tribal Households, Businesses, and Community Anchor Institutions the project will connect with Qualifying Broadband Service
- Number of Unserved Tribal Households, Businesses, and Community Anchor Institutions the project will connect with speeds higher than Qualifying Broadband Service
- Number of total Tribal households at or below 150% of the poverty line



# ID: Project Purpose and Benefits

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As a part of the Project Purpose and Benefits Section, applicants must include the following information in their application for the proposed service area:

- The distance to the nearest fiber node
- A list of libraries, if any, receiving E-Rate funding
- Plans to deploy a network which meets the quality-of-service performance measures such that network outages do not exceed, on average, 48 hours over any 365-day period



# Level of Need Sample Table

TOTAL Number of Tribal Households on Tribal Land?	300
Number of UNSERVED Tribal households on Tribal Land?	150
Number of UNSERVED Tribal households that this project will connect to Qualifying Broadband Service (defined as 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload with sufficient latency for real time interactive applications)?	150
Number receiving speeds higher than Qualifying Broadband Service, specifying the speed level?	150 at 100 Mbps/20 Mbps
Number of UNSERVED Tribal Businesses that this project will connect to Qualifying Broadband Service?	10
Number receiving speeds higher than Qualifying Broadband Service, specifying the speed level?	5 at 100 Mbps/20 Mbps
Number of UNSERVED Tribal Community Anchor Institutions that this project will connect to Qualifying Broadband Service?	5
Number receiving speeds higher than Qualifying Broadband Service, specifying the speed level?	5 at 100 Mbps/20 Mbps



# Poverty Sample Table

<b>Data Source Description</b>	<b>Calculation Method</b>	<b>Total Native American/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian households in the proposed service area at or below 150% of the poverty line</b>	<b>Additional Factors for Consideration</b>
Tribal census, HHS poverty guidelines, etc.	$\frac{25 \text{ Tribal Households at or below 150\% poverty line}}{100 \text{ Total Tribal Households}}$	25%	





# ID: Job Creation and Labor Standards

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Applicants should include:

- Total number of expected jobs funded by the project (part time and full time)
- Total number of expected jobs for Native Americans/Alaska Natives/Native Hawaiians
- Total number of expected jobs which comply with the Tribe's TERO (if applicable)
- Any plans to offer workforce development trainings, and plans to address labor shortages
- A description of whether and, if so, how the project will incorporate strong labor standards, consistent with Tribal law, including project labor agreements and community benefit agreements that offer wages at or above the prevailing rate and include local hire provisions



# ID: Speed Tiers and Pricing

- Applicants should provide a list of all proposed speed and price offerings, and include a comparison to comparable local services
- Applicants should also include plans for participation in federal subsidy programs, such as the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program, to reduce costs of broadband service for Tribal households

Type	Proposed Speed Offering	Proposed Pricing	Average in the area (include Company)
Residential	25/3	39.99	59.99 (Company X)
	50/10	49.99	69.99
	100/20	59.99	79.99
Commercial	100/100	99.99	129.99
	200/200	199.99	249.99
	500/500	299.99	369.99



# ID: Project Plan

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Applicants must include a project plan that includes:

- Timelines for implementation of all major project activities
- Key milestones and when each major project activity will start and end
- A description of how progress will be tracked
- A description of the projects' outcomes and performance measures, including metrics, planned data collection, and/or evaluation methodologies
- Details on cost effectiveness (e.g., costs for single network and economies of scale for consortium); service capacity; timeframes for construction; and scalability



# Sample Project Plan

Major Milestones (Y/N)	Project Objectives & Activities	Evaluation Criteria	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4			
			Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4
Y	Environmental Review	Call w/THPO & Environmental Consultant; begin NEPA process		X														
N	Identify Architect/Engineer	Follow entity Procurement Policy for RFP		X														
N	Begin search for Construction Company	Follow entity Procurement Policy			x													



# ID: Efforts to Minimize Lack of Service

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Applicants should include details on any steps they have already taken to reduce or eliminate any service gaps on their Tribal Land. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Previous federal or state broadband awards
- Network planning, engineering, or design
- Permitting or environmental assessments in support of broadband deployment
- Stop gap measures to increase connectivity, including broadband affordability programs or equipment distributions
- Funding under TBCP Round 1



# ID: Sustainability

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Complete applications will include a clear plan for long-term network sustainability beyond the award period. Demonstrations of this must include:

- Projected revenues (pro-forma)
- Accounting for operating expenses
- Estimations of working capital
- Equipment replacement funding

Applicants are also encouraged to include plans for workforce and local capacity building to increase the sustainability of the network. Projects that include clear plans for such activities will receive an additional point during Merit Review



# ID: Environmental

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Applicants must provide a brief description of the physical project area and its surroundings (e.g., disturbed or developed land vs. open space; adjacent natural resources, such as rivers, wetlands, or forestlands; and any protected lands or resources in or near the project area), including site and aerial photographs

Applications should also include the following:

- Plans to comply with relevant environmental, historical, and cultural preservation requirements
- Copies of any environmental or historical preservation review documents prepared for the project (does not count against 20-page limit)
- An assessment of weather and climate hazards within the Tribal Land served by the project and a description of how the applicant intends to avoid and/or mitigate the weather and climate risks identified



# ID: Physical Area Description Sample

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Project Narratives should contain detailed photos of the proposed project area, including site photos and aerial imagery, as well as a description of the physical area in which ground disturbing activities will take place.

These descriptions should include:

1. A description of potential ground disturbing activities, or those involving potential historic or cultural resources.

Example:

"The Marysville Fiber Optic Network would install 58 miles of fiber optic cable in a previously disturbed existing road right of way along Route 42 from Dalton to Marysville in Whitefield and Murray Counties. The project would install new conduit for the cable primarily using a vibratory plow; ground disturbance from plowing is estimated to be 6 inches wide and up to 36 inches deep, with the trench being immediately filled in and covered. Handholes, level with the ground and measuring approximately 17" × 30" × 36" would be installed every 5 miles. For the Marysville River crossing, the conduit would be mounted to the underside of the Marysville Bridge, a historic bridge originally constructed in 1927. "





# ID: Physical Area Description Sample

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2. A brief description of the physical project area and its surroundings (e.g., disturbed or developed land vs. open space; adjacent natural resources, such as rivers, wetlands, or forestlands; and any protected lands or resources in or near the project area)

Example:

"There are 2 culverts along the proposed route, for which directional boring would be used to go underneath. The proposed route is in a previously disturbed area within the road shoulder, surrounded by woods and open fields from mile 19 to mile 37. The beginning and end of the proposed route are within developed areas with residential and commercial development on either side of the road shoulder."



# ID: Physical Area Description Sample

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3. How the applicant intends to comply with the environmental and historic preservation and cultural requirements (including, but not limited to, the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act) and, if applicable, a copy of any environmental and historic preservation review documentation that has been prepared in connection with obtaining permits or approvals from State, Tribal, local or other federal entities.

Example:

"There are no public lands or protected/restricted uses within the proposed route. A review of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation system indicates that 20 threatened or endangered species may occur in the project area (attachment 1), however the proposed project would not require any tree clearing, vegetation removal, and would not impact caves or other habitats where listed mammals and plant species are found, nor would it occur in any rivers, streams, creeks, bogs, marshes, or other water bodies where the listed birds, fishes, or clams would be found. The Marysville River crossing would not require any activities to occur on or in the water. A review of the National Wetlands Inventory's Wetlands Mapper (attachment 2) did not indicate any wetlands that could be impacted by the proposed route."



# ID: Climate Resiliency

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Applicants should include an assessment of potential climate and/or weather-related hazards and challenges within their proposed service area (i.e., wildfires, floods, severe weather events, permafrost thaw), and plans to avoid and/or mitigate those risks.

Applicants can use the below resources when creating their assessments:

- [National Climate Assessment – 2018](#)
- [NOAA State Climate Summaries](#)
- [NOAA Disaster and Risk Mapping Tool](#)
- [NOAA Storm Event Database](#)
- [FEMA National Risk Index](#)
- [FEMA Flood Risk Map](#)



# **Additional Required Documents for ID Projects**

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# ID: Maps of Proposed Service Areas

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- Applicants must submit mapping in the form of a GIS Shapefile as a part of their application.
- Applications with maps that are submitted in any other format will be considered incomplete.
- Applicants should separate infrastructure funded by TBCP from what is existing, or not funded by TBCP, using separate layers or files.



# ID: Maps of Proposed Service Areas

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Mapping shapefiles must include at least the following elements:

- Proposed fiber or wireless infrastructure (routes, towers, power poles, buildings, etc.)
- Existing fiber or infrastructure (towers, power poles, buildings, etc.) in a separate layer or file
- Routes and locations of overhead or underground construction, including drop points
- Fiber counts and innerduct size.
- Handholes, Splice points, Cabinets, and testing stations
- Power supply and backup power
- Backhaul connections
- Tribal boundary, census blocks, and proposed service area
- Tribal home, business, and Community Anchor Institution locations
- Points of Presence, Interconnects, and hand-offs
- Proposed and/or existing network shelters
- Network propagation maps if using a wireless solution

*(See NOFO 2 section; D.2.c.iii)*



# ID: Maps of Proposed Service Areas

For more information on mapping and available resources, please consult the recording of our September Webinar, linked below.



[Full Video](#)

[NTIA Presentation Slides](#)

[Department of Interior Slides](#)



# ID: Tribal Resolutions of Consent

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- Resolutions of Consent are required for all Infrastructure Deployment Projects AND from all Consortium and Tribal Organization applicants
- Resolutions of Consent:
  - Should be on official Tribal letterhead
  - Must be dated after the release of the NOFO (July 27, 2023)
  - Must reference the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program NOFO 2
- For applicants seeking Equitable Distribution funds, Resolutions must include a request to apply a Tribal Governments eligibility to the included project
- Applications missing Resolutions may be removed from consideration if not cured at the Initial Administrative and Eligibility Review stage





# ID: Certification of Unserved Status-General Requirements

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Each applicant must submit a Tribal Government Certification from each Tribal Government included within their proposed service area(s). The Certification must:

- Be a Tribal Resolution on official Tribal letterhead
- Be dated after July 27, 2023
- Include the method by which the Tribe determined its unserved status
- All required disclosures, as outlined in Section D.2.c.iv of the NOFO
- If submitting a challenge to the FCC's National Broadband Map, include the date, submitting entity, and number of challenged locations included in the challenge



# ID: Certification of Unserved Status-Required Disclosures

As a part of their Certification(s), applicants must include the following:

- Disclosure of all Enforceable Buildout Commitments.
- Disclosure of a terminated Enforceable Buildout Commitment. A Tribal Government must disclose whether it has terminated an agreement qualifying as an Enforceable Buildout Commitment in anticipation of receiving funding under the TBCP. Failure to disclose such information may result in NTIA removing the application from consideration for TBCP funding.
- Disclosure of the presence of facilities capable of delivering Qualifying Broadband Service, including fiber facilities or other broadband technology, deployed on Tribal Lands if the Tribe has knowledge of their locations.

**False, fictitious, or fraudulent statements (or concealment or omission of a material fact) in the forms and supporting documents submitted as part of the complete application packet may subject applicants to criminal prosecution (including under 18 U.S.C. § 1001 and/or 1621) and may subject applicants to civil and administrative penalties and other remedies.**



# ID: Other Documentation

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Other required documents include:

- Budget Justification and Narrative
- Indirect Cost Rate
- Pro Forma Financial Projections
- Physical Network Diagrams and System Designs

Optional documents that can also be included, if needed, are:

- Community Economic Development Strategy
- Request for Extension of Award Period

**For more information on these and other documents, be sure to attend future webinars on these topics**



# Allowable Activities

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# Allowable Activities – All Projects

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- Personnel costs (salary, hourly wage, benefits, etc.)
- Sub-awards and contracts
  - Applicants should consult Section D.7.d of the NOFO for more information on sub-grants and awards
- Administrative and Indirect costs (limited to 2 percent of total award)
- Grant preparation costs (limited to 5 percent of total award)
  - Must be incurred after July 27

**All costs must be in accordance with the cost principles outlined in 2 CFR200.  
For a full list of eligible activities and expenses, consult Section D.7 of the NOFO**



# U&A: Allowable Activities

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Allowable activities under Broadband Adoption and Use projects include, but are not limited to:

- Acquiring broadband related equipment or software
- Affordable broadband programs
  - Can be offered for a maximum of 5 years
- Training or education programs
- Providing broadband to public spaces or CAIs
- Digital Inclusion planning or studies
- Data collection and evaluation

**For a full list of eligible activities and expenses, consult Section D.7.c of the NOFO**



# ID: Allowable Activities

Allowable activities under Broadband Infrastructure Deployment projects include, but are not limited to:

- Costs for construction (materials, labor, contractors, etc.)
- Leases, ROWs, IRUs, etc.
  - TBCP funding for IRUs is available for a maximum of 20 years, and DIAs for 5 years
- Engineering and network design
- Planning, feasibility, and sustainability studies
  - Limited to only 2.5 percent of Infrastructure Deployment award
- Permitting, environmental or historical review
- Performance bonds or irrevocable Letters of Credit
- Workforce Training
  - Must be directly related to project execution

**For a full list of eligible activities and expenses, consult Section D.7.b of the NOEO**



# Unallowable Costs

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- Profit, fees, or other charges above the actual cost of an item or service
- Infrastructure or construction started prior to award
- Covered communications equipment or services
  - Consult 2 C.F.R. 200.216, Prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment for more information
- Service to areas already covered by an existing provider or an Enforceable Buildout Commitment
- Dark Fiber
- Launching of satellites





**Q & A**



**Thank You**

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