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Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program

Performance (Technical) Report Frequently Asked Questions

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

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Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program

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This resource is not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, the specific requirements set forth in program [Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO)](), existing [Department of Commerce (DOC) Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual]() (Grants Manual) requirements, or other Departmental Administrative Orders (DAOs) and Federal Circulars. Similarly, this guidance document does not supersede or supplement National Institute of Standards and Technology Grants Management Division (NIST GMD) policy and procedures related to their work on financial assistance awards. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, and the requirements set forth in the NOFO, shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in this guidance.

General Information

Q: What are the reporting periods for the Semi-Annual Performance (Technical) Report?

A: Per the Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) Pilot Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), each recipient is required to submit a Performance (Technical) Report to the Federal Program Officer (FPO), Grants Officer, and Grants Specialist named in the award agreement on a semi-annual (for the periods ending March 31 and September 30) and annual basis (for the period ending September 30) of each year of the recipient's Period of Performance (PoP). Semi-Annual Performance (Technical) Reports are due no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the reporting period (April 30 and October 30). The report due no later than April 30 covers programmatic work that occurred from October 1 to March 31, and the report due no later than October 30 covers programmatic work that occurred from April 1 to September 30. The Grants Office will notify the recipient if any adjustments are made to the process.

Annual Performance (Technical) Reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the end of the reporting period, except when a Final Performance (Technical) Report is required under 47 C.F.R. § 302.10. The Annual Performance (Technical) Report is due on December 29 and covers all programmatic work completed in the prior federal fiscal year (October 1 to September 30).

Report Type	Reporting Period	Submission Method	Data Submitted by Recipient
Semi-Annual Performance (Technical) Report	Oct. 1 – Mar. 31 **Due**: April 30 Apr. 1 – Sept. 30 **Due**: October 30	Submit via email to greports@nist.gov and CC: Assigned FPO	Performance on key programmatic indicators and budget.
Annual Performance (Technical) Report	Oct. 1 – Sept. 30	Submit via email to greports@nist.gov and CC: Assigned FPO	Performance on key programmatic

Report Type	Reporting Period	Submission Method	Data Submitted by Recipient
	Due: December 29 except when a Final Performance (Technical) Report is due		indicators and budget.
Final Performance (Technical) Report [Closeout Report]	Cumulative award period Due: 120 days after end of project period	Submit via email to greports@nist.gov and CC: Assigned FPO	Performance on key programmatic indicators and budget.

Q: Where can the recipient find their PoP?

A: Recipients can find their PoP on the CD-450 or the CD-451 if NIST approved a No Cost Extension Award Action Request (AAR).

Q: If multiple reports are due on the same date, can the recipient submit everything in a single email?

A: If a Semi-Annual Performance (Technical) Report, Federal Financial Report (FFR) (SF-425), and Annual Certification, when applicable, are all due on the same date, then the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) recommends that the recipient submit these forms together in one email to greports@nist.gov. However, if a Build America, Buy America (BABA) Report is due on the same date as the Semi-Annual Performance (Technical) Report, NTIA recommends that the recipient submit the BABA Report in a separate email to cmc@ntia.gov. Please note that the BABA Report is not required of all recipients.

The recipient should copy their assigned FPO on all report submissions.

Q: Can the recipient submit supplemental attachments with the Performance (Technical) Report?

A: Recipients may submit attachments with the Performance (Technical) Report to provide additional context to their assigned FPO. However, any information included on the supplemental attachments not included within the required report template will not be utilized for CMC data collection purposes. The recipient should make an effort to include all relevant information on the Performance (Technical) Report template.

Q: How should the recipient request an extension on reports?

A: To receive an extension for any report, the recipient must send a request via email to UGAM@nist.gov explaining why they cannot submit the report on time and confirming a new target submission date. The assigned FPO should always be copied on these emails. Recipients should request a report extension as soon as possible, and always prior to the report's due date.

However, before requesting a report deadline extension, the recipient should discuss their request with their assigned FPO first. FPOs can provide additional guidance on completing and submitting reports that may prevent a missed deadline.

Section 1: General Project Information

Q: What is the difference between milestones (requested in Section 1a) and successes (requested in Section 1d)?

A: Both milestones and successes are important to the implementation of your project. “Milestones” are typically significant events included in the recipient’s project plan that demonstrate large-scale movement of the project. For example, the initiation of a device distribution plan on campus is a milestone.

“Successes” are typically smaller steps that led the recipient to achieve the overall project milestones and goals. For example, finding a qualified candidate for the Principal Investigator position is a success. No success is too small to report.

Q: Is there a character limit in the General Project Information Section?

A: There is no word or character limit in the General Project Information Section. The recipient may use as many words as necessary to provide the required information. However, the recipient should limit responses to only include details about the CMC project.

Section 2: Organizational Partners

Q: What should the recipient enter in the “Partner Role” column? Can the recipient enter any role?

A: According to the CMC Reporting Guidance, the Partner Role must be one of the following: subrecipient, contractor, or unfunded collaborator. Please use one of these three options to describe the partner organization’s role in the project. Definitions of these terms can be found in the CMC Reporting Guidance’s Glossary of Report Terms and Definitions.

Q: What does the column “Change in the Past Six Months” mean?

A: In this column, the recipient should select “Yes” to indicate that the involvement of or role in the project of an organizational partner during the reporting period has changed. Select “No” if the organizational partner’s involvement and/or role has not changed since the last Semi-Annual Performance (Technical) Report.

Before changing partners, the recipient should consult with their assigned FPO. If the partner was named in the original application material, a Change in Scope Award Action Request (AAR) may be required to reassign project activities to the new partner. In addition, if the new partner’s responsibilities address new project goals, then a Change in Scope AAR may be necessary as well.

Q: Does the recipient need to provide any additional information if a partner has changed in the past six months?

A: Recipients do not need to provide any additional information in the report on how the partner's role changed. There is no section in the report template that requires the recipient to elaborate on partner role changes, unless the partner is a community anchor institution (CAI). However, the recipient should inform their assigned FPO of the change before it occurs.

If the partner in question is a CAI, then the recipient should provide more details and describe any changes in Section 4a.

Section 3: Remote Learning Infrastructure

Q: Do Sections 3c and 3d refer to all classes within the recipient organization or only the classes provided through the CMC grant?

A: Sections 3c and 3d refer to all classes provided by the recipient, regardless of the funding stream.

Q: How does NTIA define "remote" and "hybrid" learning for Sections 3c and 3d?

A: NTIA defines "remote" learning as classroom instruction that is entirely virtual and utilizes technology to enable learning for students and/or participants who are not on site. NTIA defines "hybrid" learning as classroom instruction that is partially virtual and partially in-person and where technology is used to enable the off-site instruction. For the purposes of this report, it is not relevant if the instruction is synchronous or asynchronous.

Section 4: Anchor Community Adoption

Q: How can the recipient find the correct census tract information for their anchor community activities?

A: The recipient should refer to the CMC Anchor Community Eligibility Dashboard to find the correct census tract information for their anchor community activities. This link is also in the CMC Reporting Guidance Section 4. Within the dashboard, the recipient should search for their institution's name and select the relevant area within the eligible anchor community to see the census tract information.

Q: For Section 4b, what does the recipient enter in the "Baseline" column and in the "Current" column?

A: According to the CMC Reporting Guidance Section 4, the recipient should use the "Baseline" column to note the values for the indicators (the number of participants enrolled in community based programs, the number of participants who went on to obtain jobs following completion of those programs, the number of anchor community members with a broadband subscription, or other indicators not listed in the table) at the time of the award start date. The "Baseline" column will not change from report to report as the values represent the measurements from the start date of the project. The "Current" column should report the values of the metrics obtained within the relevant reporting period.

Q: For Section 4b, what should the recipient enter if the "Current" column is different from what was projected in the Baseline Report due to changes in subcontractor negotiations?

A: Metrics reported in the Performance (Technical) Report may differ from the metrics reported in the Baseline Report. NTIA expects that every recipient report the most current and accurate data from the relevant reporting period, including in Section 4b, even if the data differs from projections in the Baseline Report.

Section 5: Broadband Internet & Devices

Q: How should a recipient report a purchased device type that is not in the available dropdown list for Section 5a?

A: If the purchased device(s) is not in the available drop-down list, the recipient should select “Other” in the dropdown menu and specify the type of device in Section 5b.

Q: In the “Total Cost to Institution” column in Section 5c, should the recipient only include funds expended with CMC grant funds or should the recipient include funds expended in addition to the CMC grant funds?

A: Yes, the recipient should include the full cost of the Broadband Subscription, even if that includes funds obtained outside of the CMC grant.

Q: Should the recipient include Wi-Fi and broadband internet provided via internet service providers in Section 5c?

A: Yes, the recipient should include any internet subscriptions purchased with CMC funds in Section 5c.

Q: Should the recipient indicate individual Microsoft licenses purchased for CMC-distributed laptops in Section 5c?

A: Yes, all measures of connectivity are covered under the subscription model. The recipient should indicate the provider type and number of units (individual licenses) for the Microsoft license purchased for CMC-distributed laptops in Section 5c. For example, if the recipient purchases one Microsoft license for CMC-funded laptops distributed to 100 students (100 units), they would ensure that Section 5c holds a line item that includes 100 subscriptions with students as the recipient.

Q: In Section 5d, what should the recipient enter in the “Description” column?

A: In the “Description” column, the recipient should describe the broadband deployments that have been undertaken with CMC funds. For example, the description may read “updating switches, cabling, and antennas for satellite campus” to describe the broadband deployment that has occurred. Please provide as many details as possible.

Section 6: Digital Skills and Workforce Development

Q: If the recipient requires students and/or community members to attend a workshop to receive broadband devices should those workshops be included in Section 6a?

A: If the workshop is paid for with CMC funds, then the recipient should include it in Section 6a.

Q: If the recipient offers workshops and/or training, where does the recipient note the challenges associated with participants completing the training?

A: The recipient should note any challenges they are experiencing with digital skills training in Section 6c of the report. Each section of the report provides a field where the recipient can describe the challenges they are facing in that area of their project. The recipient should also inform their assigned FPO of the challenges they are experiencing in their Quarterly Calls and check-ins for guidance.

Section 7: Measurement and Evaluation

Q: In Section 7a, what should the recipient include if the recipient has not yet measured the project's effectiveness? Should the recipient leave the "How Was This Measured" column blank?

A: The recipient should never leave the "How Was This Measured" column blank. Instead, the recipient should always fill the "How Was This Measured" column with intended or actual measurements. If a recipient is unsure of how to measure the grant outcomes, they should contact their assigned FPO for assistance.

Q: For Sections 7a and 7b, what is NTIA requesting in the "Benefit" and "Beneficiary" columns?

A: In the "Benefit" column, the recipient should describe the expected benefit of the project purpose entered. For example, the benefit may be preparing students for employment or having the option to offer hybrid and virtual classes.

In the "Beneficiary" column, the recipient should list the expected beneficiary of that project purpose. This includes the Institution, Students, Community Members, or Others (if the three other options do not encompass all of the beneficiaries of the grant). For example, if the benefit is preparing students for employment, then the beneficiary is "Students."

Section 8: Budget

Q: In Section 8 of the Performance (Technical) Report, should the recipient include the total funds expended in the PoP or only include funds spent for the relevant reporting period?

A: Section 8 is cumulative. Therefore, in the "Total Funds Expended" column, the recipient should include all funds spent from the start of the PoP to the end of the report's reporting period.