



Understanding The Policy Notice: *Selecting Technology*

Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment Program

July 2024



This document is intended solely to assist applicants in better understanding the Broadband Equity Access, and Deployment (BEAD) grant program and the requirements set forth in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and follow-on policies and guidance for this program. This document does not and is not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, the terms and conditions of the award, or the specific application requirements set forth in the NOFO. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, the terms and conditions of the award, the requirements set forth in the NOFO, and follow-on policies and guidance, shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in this document.

The purpose of the Selecting Tech Policy Notice is to provide **comprehensive guidance on obtaining applications during subgrantee selection** for deploying broadband service to all unserved and underserved locations, **prioritizing the most robust, affordable, and scalable technologies**. The document includes critical considerations for engaging directly with ISPs in the absence of competitive applications to serve a location.

Technology Hierarchy

The principal focus of the BEAD Program is to deploy broadband service to all **unserved and underserved locations**. To achieve this goal, the BEAD NOFO establishes a **clear hierarchy** for awarding unserved and underserved service projects, outlined below:

- 1) **End-to-End Fiber Optic** facilities for broadband projects (*i.e.*, Priority Broadband Project);
- 2) **Reliable Broadband Services (RBS)** using technologies such as Cable Modem, Hybrid Fiber/Coaxial, Digital Subscriber Line (DSL), or Licensed Fixed Wireless;
- 3) **Alternative technologies**, such as Unlicensed Fixed Wireless and Low-Earth Orbit Satellite, are considered when the cost of deploying RBS exceeds the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT).

1. Strategies in Designing Subgrantee Selection

- A. **Broaden the Pool of Applicants:** Encourage diverse Internet Service Provider (ISP) participation to foster competition, ensuring affordable and high-quality broadband options.
- B. **Structure Funding as Fixed Amount Subgrants:** Simplify administrative processes and reduce costs for ISPs.
- C. **Aggregate Locations into Optimal Project Areas:** Combine harder-to-serve with more economically desirable locations to increase coverage.
- D. **Consider High-Cost Designations:** Eligible Entities may designate high-cost areas as separate project areas to enable 100% BEAD funding; combining them with non-high-cost areas is permissible but match must be carefully calculated.
- E. **Utilize EHCPLT:** Thoughtfully use the EHCPLT as a tool to maximize program deployment goals.

2. Strategies When No Proposals Are Received

- A. **Subdivide Project Areas in Later Rounds:** Allow partial project applications to cover most locations with reliable service while using alternative technologies for harder-to-serve spots.
- B. **Engage Directly with Providers:** Must be done fairly and transparently and only when the ISP previously had opportunity to competitively apply to serve the BSLs in question.
- C. **Leverage Additional Resources:** Utilize additional funding sources like local funds, corporate social responsibility efforts, and philanthropic contributions.
- D. **Identify Causes for Lack of Proposals:** Address barriers such as permitting or right-of-way issues and provide evidence for non-serviceable locations.
- E. **Request Match Waivers:** Eligible Entities can request match waivers from NTIA when unable to secure required match funding, particularly after unsuccessful rounds or identifying economic challenges.
- F. **Request Technical Assistance (TA) from NTIA:** Eligible Entities should seek NTIA's TA to implement strategies and overcome obstacles, particularly when facing difficulties in securing RBS applications.

3. Documentation of Efforts

- A. **Monitor Progress:** NTIA will evaluate compliance with BEAD NOFO priorities during the selection process and in the Final Proposal.
- B. **Justify Selections:** Document strategies and provide rationales for technology choices, ensuring alignment with BEAD NOFO priorities.

The Full version of the Policy Notice can be found in the following link : [Selecting Technology Policy Notice](#)