



Application Guide for the State Broadband and Development Grant Program

This document has been prepared by the New America Foundation's Open Technology initiative as an application guide for the State Broadband and Development Grant Program outlined in the July 1, 2009 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). In addition to the requirements and documents needed to apply for this NOFA, this guide also provides an overview of the application process and what data awardees of the grant will need to provide to the NTIA. All information is primary-sourced and page numbers refer to the July 8, 2009 Federal Register volume 74, No. 129.

Further questions can be addressed to the Open Technology Initiative team via phone (202-986-2700) or e-mail:

James Losey <losey@newamerica.net>

<http://www.newamerica.net/programs/oti>

Overview

On July 1, 2009, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced the availability of grants from the \$350 million appropriated by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to collect state-level broadband data for the creation of a national map of broadband availability in the United States. Grantees must map address-level data on the availability of broadband service within the state, the technologies (including spectrum for wireless broadband) used to provide broadband service in such areas, the speed and prices at which broadband service is available, and broadband service availability at public schools, libraries, hospitals, colleges and universities, and all public buildings owned or leased by the state or municipalities. The map will be used by NTIA for grant-making decisions under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) as well as be searchable by the public. [p. 32547]

General Information

- While the Recovery appropriated up to \$350 million in total for broadband maps, the NOFA will initially award grant ranging from \$1.9 to \$3.8 million will be available per state, depending on the size of the state (or territory) and the specific of the project. An additional \$500,000 is available for the planning portion of each project to identify and address broadband challenges in the state. [pp. 32549-32550]
- Broadband Planning funding is an optional portion of the application. Projects seeking additional funds for Broadband Planning must also meet the requirements for Broadband Mapping.
- *Eligible Applicants* are either (i) an agency or instrumentality of a State, or a municipality or other subdivision (or agency or instrumentality of a municipality or other subdivision) of a State; (ii) a nonprofit organization that is described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(a) of such Code; or (iii) an independent agency or commission in which an office of a State is a member on behalf of the State. [p. 32457]
- *Only one eligible entity per state.* [p. 32547]
- Each applicant will be reviewed against a program standard, and applicants must meet the program standard to receive grant funding. [p. 32547]
- Awardees can use data collected under this program for any lawful use consistent with the requirements of the program. [p. 32547]
- *Applicants must match at least 20% of the total cost of the project through non-Federal funding.* Matching funds can be cash or in-kind. [p. 32550]
- Broadband Mapping Priorities: [p. 32547]
 - Provide comprehensive and verifiable data that meet the program standards listed in the NOFA.
 - Have a workable framework for repeated updates of the data.
 - Plan for collaboration with state-level agencies, local authorities, and other constituencies.
 - Feasible projects with reasonable and cost-efficient budgets.
 - Timeline for expedient data delivery.
- Broadband is considered "available" to an end-user at an address if a broadband service provider does, or could, with in 7-10 business days without an extraordinary commitment of resources provision a two-way data transmission to and from the internet with advertised speeds of at least 768 kbps downstream and at least 200 kbps up stream to the end-user. [p. 32548]
- Broadband speeds are advertised speeds of at least 768 kbps downstream and at least 200 kbps up stream to the end-user. [p. 32548]
- Pre-award costs after the enactment of the Recovery Act (February 17, 2009) but before the effective date of the award are allowable at the written approval of the NTIA. [p. 32549]
- **Unserved Area:** an area, composed of one or more contiguous census blocks where at least 90 percent of households in the proposed funded service area lack access to facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service. [p. 32549]
- **Underserved Area: Last Mile Projects**—an area composed of one or more contiguous census blocks where at least one of the following is met: 1) no more than 50 percent of households in the

proposed funded service area have access to facilities based, terrestrial broadband service at greater than the minimum broadband speed; 2) no fixed or mobile broadband service provider advertises broadband speeds of at least 3 Mbps downstream in the proposed funded service area; or 3) the rate of broadband subscribership for the proposed service area is 40 percent of households or less. [p. 32549]

- Awardees will be responsible for 4 sets of state-wide data:
 - Availability of broadband service, by address, in each Provider's service area, and wireless services not provided to a specific address.
 - Residential broadband service pricing in each Provider's service area.
 - Broadband service infrastructure in each Provider's service area.
 - Community Anchor institutions in their State.
- A data set is *substantially complete* when it contains data on broadband services provided by: [p. 32549]
 - 70 percent of broadband service providers in a State.
 - 80 percent of households in a State.
 - 90 percent of households in rural areas of the State.
 - 95 percent of public Community Anchor Institutions such as schools, libraries, universities and healthcare providers.
- Applicants must maintain trade secrets, commercial or financial information, or otherwise confidential information as a record not subject to public disclosure. Applicants may issue nondisclosure agreements to protect the confidential or proprietary nature of the information received from broadband service providers and other organizations during the data collection phase. [p. 32550]
- Applicant must agree to provide NTIA with broadband data of the type and format provided in the *Technical Appendix* provided in the NOFA.
- Buy American Requirement: *All iron, steel, and manufacturing goods used in the project must be produced in the United States.* [p. 32554]
- Prevailing wages or better must be paid to all laborers and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors on the project. [p. 32554]
- Recipients that expend \$500,000 or more of Federal funds during their fiscal year are required to submit an organization-wide financial and compliance audit report. [p. 32554]

The application must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. ET on August 14, 2009. The application is available on grants.gov on the website listed below.

Websites

Grants.gov:

<http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=pZLdKkCRNZ4zp2DvMxDXGvtGpq8025JNKwYRr536vzn202Ryg8lz!-723925807?oppld=48284&mode=VIEW>

Notice of Funding Availability for State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program:

http://www.ntia.doc.gov/frnotices/2009/FR_BroadbandMappingNOFA_090708.pdf

Federal Register, Vol. 74, No. 129, pp. 32545-32565:

<http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/PDFgate.cgi?WAISdocID=21048072385+0+2+0&WAISection=retrieve>

Application:

<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/packages/opp0660-ZA29.pdf>

Timeline:

Applications Due	August 14, 2009 by 11:59 p.m.
Awards announced	On or around September 15, 2009
Available data due to NTIA	November 1, 2009
All data due to NTIA	February 1, 2010
First update of Data	September 1, 2010

Application Details

Required Documents: [pp. 32551-32552]

- Records:
 - Organizational DUNS (available at www.dunandbradstreet.com or 1-866-705-5711).
 - CCR (Applicant must register in the CCR system at <http://www.ccr.gov/StartRegistration.aspx> if not already registered).
- Program Narrative (40-page limit) including:
 - Executive Summary
 - Description of unserved and underserved areas of the state
 - Description of Data Gathering, accuracy and verification of data, accessibility of data, and how applicant intends to ensure both transparency and confidentiality of information
 - Project Feasibility including budget, qualifications of applicant, timeline of major goals, methodology for updating data at least semi-annually for at least five years, and how a description on how the applicant intends to collaborate with State-level agencies and local authorities to carry out the project
- Additional Documents and Forms
 - Standard Form 424, Program Abstract/Program Narrative
 - Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance
 - Standard Form 424A, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs
 - Standard Form 424B, Assurances--Non-Construction Programs
 - Standard Form LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
 - CD-511 Certifying Regarding Lobbying
 - Letter of State Designation signed by the Governor or equivalent chief executive of the State affirming the applicant is the single eligible entity in the State

Application Process [p. 32548]

- Eligibility: Applications will be screened for factors determining eligibility
- Technical Review: at least 3 peer/expert review panel members will individual review the application using the scoring criteria outlined in the NOFA
- Programmatic Review and Revision Process: each eligible application will be reviewed by programmatic staff for policy and conformity to programmatic goals. Program staff will assess:
 - If the proposed project meets the funding constraints
 - Eligible costs and matching funds are included in the applications budget
 - the extent which an application complements or duplicate projects previously funded or under consideration by NTIA
- The final selection for awarding the grant by the Assistant Secretary will consider the following selection factors:
 - The evaluations of the peer/expert reviewers;
 - The analysis of Program Staff
 - The degree to which the proposed grant meets the program purpose
 - Avoiding conflicts with other Federal agencies
 - Availability of funds

Although only one eligible entity can represent each state, applicants must meet the program standard to receive grant funding. [p. 32547] The Assistant Secretary of for Communications and Information will make the final decision on awarding grants.

Evaluation Criteria

NTIA will evaluate applications using the following criteria [pp. 32552-32553]

- Data (30%) all applicants will be evaluated based on the data they propose to provide NTIA including accuracy and verification.
- Project Feasibility (30%) including budget reasonableness and relevant experience of the applicant
- Expedient Data Delivery (20%) NTIA prefers a substantially complete set of data be available by November 1, 2009. A substantially complete set of all broadband data is required by February 1, 2010.
- Process for Repeated data Updating (10%) applicants are required to propose to continually update the data semi-annually for at least five years. Automated or direct-from-provider data input is encouraged.
- Planning and Collaboration (10%) reviewers will examine the extent of planned collaboration and existing relationships with State-level agencies, and local authorities, businesses, and non-profits as well as the efficacy of the proposed planning process

Technical Details

Awardees of the grant will have to make the following information available to the NTIA and a comprehensive plan to collect the data is integral to the grant application. Because awardees will be responsible for updating the data semi-annually for five years,

Required Technical Information: [pp. 32557-32563]

- Broad Band Service Availability
 - List of addresses with broadband availability in each service provider's service area (available means a provider does, or could within 7-10 business days "without an extraordinary commitment of resources, provide broadband service).
 - Address, type of address (residential, small business, enterprise, governmental etc.), type of technology, maximum advertised upstream/downstream, typical upstream/downstream.
 - Data for the entire state should be submitted as a single, tab-delimited plain text file.
 - Wireless availability should be shown on a map with non-overlapping polygons. Coverage means 95% of the time users experience the listed speed within 50 feet of the polygon's boundary Spectrum frequencies used by each provider must be identified as well.
- Broadband service and speed
 - Average revenue per user (ARPU).
 - "Subscriber-weighted nominal speed" (blended average rate) (sum of the product maximum advertised download stream and the number of subscribers at who receive that speed for the reporting month, divided by average total of subscribers.
 - Data for the entire state should be submitted as a single, tab-delimited plain text file.
- Broadband Service Infrastructure in Provider's Service Area
 - List of all the locations of first points of aggregation in the networks used by facilities based providers to provide service to end-users. Data includes location, technology used, and speed (capacity).
 - List of all middle mile and backbone interconnection points (connections between service provider's network and another network).
 - Service Facility Capacity (advertised speeds, tech used, location).
 - Map of Community anchor institutions (schools, libraries, public safety etc.) location, tech of service, advertised upstream/downstream.
 - Data for the entire state should be submitted as a single, tab-delimited plain text file.
- Community Anchor Institutions:
 - List of schools, libraries, medical and healthcare provides, public safety entities, community college, and other institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations and entities.
 - For each institution, list location, type of institution, and technology type, and advertised speed of broadband service (if applicable).
 - Data for the entire state should be submitted as a single, tab-delimited plain text file.