



NTIA Broadband Grant Programs

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021

March 17, 2021

Helpful Information

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.
- [Overview of Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 | BroadbandUSA \(doc.gov\)](#)

Presentation

- The presentation along with a transcript and recording will be available on the BroadbandUSA website under Events/Past Events by Monday, March 22.
- <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/past-event>

**Please dial-in to hear the webinar: Conference Line: 800-593-7190 Passcode: 984-4951#*

Participants

Moderator:

- Laura Spining, Director of Partnerships

Presenters:

- Douglas Kinkoph, Associate Administrator, Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications
- Jennifer Duane, Director of Grants
- Scott Woods, Manager of Technical Assistance

Douglas Kinkoph

Associate Administrator

*Office of Telecommunications and
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National Telecommunications and
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National Telecommunications & Information Administration

Principal advisor to the President on telecommunications policy issues.

Expanding broadband access and adoption

Expanding the use of federal spectrum

Ensuring the Internet remains an engine
for continued innovation and economic growth



Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 - Overview

Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth, through the ACCESS BROADBAND Act

- An office tasked with performing certain responsibilities related to broadband access, adoption, and deployment, such as performing public outreach to promote access and adoption of high-speed broadband service and standardizing the process for applying for Federal broadband support.
- ACCESS BROADBAND also establishes coordination requirements among agencies that offer broadband deployment funding programs, to ensure Federal funds are spent efficiently and effectively.

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 - Overview

Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives

- Requires establishment of an office to focus on collaboration for Internet access and promotion of digital skills and digital inclusion at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), and their surrounding communities, as well as on investment in infrastructure to expand connectivity and encourage further investment.

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 - Overview

Broadband Interagency Coordination Act of 2020:

- Requires the NTIA, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Department of Agriculture to enter into an interagency agreement to coordinate the distribution of Federal funds for broadband programs, to prevent duplication of support and ensure stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 - Overview

Three new grant programs under Division N, Title IX, Sections 902 and 905 of the Act:

- Broadband Infrastructure Program
- Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program
- Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program

Jennifer Duane

Director of Grants

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National Telecommunications and
Information Administration



Broadband Infrastructure Program Grants

How Much	\$300 Million
Who can apply	<p>Covered Partnerships – defined in Section 905(a)(5) as a partnership between (A) a State, or 1 or more political subdivisions of a State; and (B) a provider of fixed broadband service.</p>
For What	<p>Covered Broadband Projects- defined in Section 905(a)(4) as a competitively and technologically neutral project for the deployment of fixed broadband service that provides qualifying broadband service in an eligible service area.</p>
When	<p>NTIA anticipates accepting applications for grants under the Broadband Infrastructure Program in Summer 2021.</p>

Broadband Infrastructure Program | Key Definitions

Qualifying Broadband Service

Section 905(a)(11) defines this term as broadband service with:

- a download speed of not less than 25 Mbps;
- an upload speed of not less than 3 Mbps; and
- a latency sufficient to support real-time, interactive applications.

Eligible Service Area

Section 905(a)(7) defines this term as a census block in which broadband service is not available at 1 or more households or businesses in the census block, as the Assistant Secretary determines from:

- Information and maps provided by the Federal Communications Commission; or
- Other information available to the Assistant Secretary, if the maps above are not available.
 - NTIA will leverage its National Broadband Availability Map in determining what qualifies as an eligible service area.

Unserved

Means (A) the household lacks access to qualifying broadband service; and (B) no broadband provider has been selected to receive, or is otherwise receiving, Federal or State funding subject to enforceable build out commitments to deploy qualifying broadband service in the specific area where the household is located by dates certain, even if such service is not yet available, provided that the Federal or State agency providing the funding has not deemed the service provider to be in default of its buildout obligations under the applicable Federal or State program.

Broadband Infrastructure Program | Eligibility

Eligibility Requirements

- To be eligible for a grant under the Broadband Infrastructure Program, the covered partnership must submit an application that describes the:
 - Covered Partnership;
 - Covered Broadband Project to be funded by the grant, including the
 - Speed or speeds at which the covered partnership plans to offer broadband service; and the
 - Cost of the project
 - Proposed Service Area
 - Any other State or Federal support provided to the provider of broadband service that is part of the covered partnership for the deployment of broadband service in the proposed service area.
 - The Covered Partnership may submit only one application for this grant program.

Broadband Infrastructure Program | Funding Priorities

Funding Priorities

Section 905(d)(4) stipulates that the Assistant Secretary will give priority, in decreasing order, for:

- Projects designed to provide broadband service to the greatest number of households in an eligible service area;
- Projects designed to provide broadband service in an eligible service area that is wholly within any area other than—
 - a county, city, or town that has a population of more than 50,000 inhabitants; and ;
 - the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town of more than 50,000 inhabitants
- Projects that are most cost-effective, prioritizing such projects in areas that are the most rural
- Projects designed to provide broadband service with a download speed of not less than 100 megabits per second and an upload speed of not less than 20 megabits per second.

Broadband Infrastructure Program | Funding Uses

Eligible Uses

A covered partnership may use grant funds to—

- i) fund the costs of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment required to provide qualifying broadband service;
- ii) fund the cost of long-term leases (for terms greater than one year) of facilities required to provide qualifying broadband service, including infeasible right-of-use (IRU) agreements;
- iii) fund reasonable pre-application expenses or grant preparation costs in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

Use Restrictions

The provider of broadband service that is part of a covered partnership receiving the grant may not use grant funds to:

- Repay or make any other payment related to a loan made by any public or private lender; or
- Use as collateral for a loan made by any public or private lender

Expenditure Deadline & Extensions

The covered partnership must expend the grant funds within one year after receipt.

- The Assistant Secretary may grant an extension for broadband construction projects.
- To qualify for an extension, the covered partnership must certify that: it has a plan for use of the funds; the construction project is underway; or extenuating circumstances require an extension to ensure project completion.

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program

How Much	\$1 Billion	
Who can apply	Tribal Governments, Tribal organizations, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, and Native Corporations.	
For What	To expand broadband adoption and deployment on tribal lands, as well as to support distance learning, remote work, and telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic.	
When	NTIA anticipates accepting applications for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grants in Summer 2021.	

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program| Eligible Entities

Eligible Entities

Section 905(a)(8) stipulates the following eligible entities:

- Tribal Governments;
- Tribal Colleges and Universities;
- The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, including Native Hawaiian education programs;
- Tribal organizations; and
- Native Corporations as defined under Section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program| Eligible Lands

Eligible Lands

Section 905(a)(13) defines Tribal Land that can be served as:

- any land located within the boundaries of (i) an Indian reservation, pueblo, or rancheria; or (ii) a former reservation within Oklahoma;
- any land not located within the boundaries of an Indian reservation, pueblo, or rancheria, the title to which is held—
 - (i) in trust by the United States for the benefit of an Indian Tribe or an individual Indian;
 - (ii) by an Indian Tribe or an individual Indian, subject to restriction against alienation under laws of the United States; or
 - (iii) by a dependent Indian community;
- any land located within a region established pursuant to section 7(a) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1606(a));
- Hawaiian Home Lands, as defined in section 801 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4221); or
- those areas or communities designated by the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior that are near, adjacent, or contiguous to reservations where financial assistance and social service programs are provided to Indians because of their status as Indians

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grant Program| Funding Uses

Eligible Uses

Section 905(c)(5) stipulates the following eligible uses of grant funds:

- broadband infrastructure deployment, including support for the establishment of carrier-neutral submarine cable landing stations;
- affordable broadband programs, including—
 - providing free or reduced-cost broadband service; and
 - preventing disconnection of existing broadband service;
- distance learning;
- telehealth;
- digital inclusion efforts; and
- broadband adoption activities.

Administrative Expenses of Eligible Entities

Section 905(c)(6) caps the amount of grant funds to be used for administrative expenses:

- An eligible entity may use not more than 2 percent of grant funds received under this subsection for administrative purposes.

Priority for Unserved Households

Section 905(c)(8) provides information about broadband infrastructure deployment:

- In using grant funds received under this subsection for new construction of broadband infrastructure, an eligible entity shall prioritize projects that deploy broadband infrastructure to unserved households.

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program | Other Considerations

Commitment and Expenditure Deadlines

Section 905(c)(4) outlines deadlines for eligible entities to commit and spend their grant funds:

- **Commitment:** Not later than 180 days after receiving grant funds under this subsection, an eligible entity shall commit the funds in accordance with the approved application of the entity.
- **Expenditure:** Not later than 1 year after receiving grant funds under this subsection, an eligible entity shall expend the grant funds.
 - The Assistant Secretary may extend the 1-year award period for an eligible entity that proposes to use the grant funds for construction of broadband infrastructure if the eligible entity certifies that: (I) the eligible entity has a plan for use of the grant funds; (II) the construction project is underway; or (III) extenuating circumstances require an extension of time to allow the project to be completed.
 - Any grant funds not expended by an eligible entity by the 1-year deadline shall be made available to other eligible entities for the purposes provided in this subsection.

Equitable Distribution

Section 905(c)(3)(A) mandates that grant funds are awarded on an equitable basis:

- The amounts appropriated under the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program shall be made available to eligible entities on an equitable basis, and not less than 3 percent of those amounts shall be made available for the benefit of Native Hawaiians.

Proposal Deadline

Section 905(e)(2)(A) stipulates the timeline for application submissions:

- During the 90-day period beginning on the date on which the Assistant Secretary issues the Notice of Funding Opportunity, an eligible entity or covered partnership may submit an application for a grant under this section.

Scott Woods

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Connecting Minority Communities (CMC) Pilot Program

How Much	\$285 Million
Who can apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); ▪ Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs); ▪ Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs); ▪ Consortiums led by HBCUs, TCUs, or MSIs that include a Minority Business Enterprise or Not-For-Profit Organization.
For What	<p>The purchase of broadband internet access service or any eligible equipment, or to hire and train information technology personnel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) to facilitate educational instruction and learning, including through remote instruction; or (2) to operate the minority business enterprise; or (3) to operate the not-for-profit organization.
When	<p>NTIA anticipates accepting applications for the CMC Pilot Program in Summer 2021.</p>

Connecting Minority Communities | Eligible Entities

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Tribal Colleges and Universities

Section
902(a)(8)-(11)
Entities

Minority Serving Institutions

Alaskan Native Serving Institution
Native Hawaiian Serving Institution
Hispanic Serving Institution
Predominantly Black Institution

Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution

Native American Serving, Non-Tribal Institution

A consortium that is led by a HBCU, TCU, or MSI and that also includes—
(i) a minority business enterprise; or
(ii) a tax-exempt organization described in section 501(c) (3) of the IRS Code of 1986

Connecting Minority Communities | Funding Uses

Eligible Uses

Section 902(c)(1)(A) stipulates the following eligible uses of grant funds:

- Purchase of broadband internet access service
 - Purchase of eligible equipment
 - Hiring and training information technology personnel
-

Coordination

Section 902(c)(3) further requires that:

- When making CMC grants, the Assistant Secretary coordinate with other Federal agencies, including the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Department of Education (ED) to ensure the efficient expenditure of Federal funds, including by preventing multiple expenditures of Federal funds for the same purpose.

Connecting Minority Communities | Priorities

Priorities

Section 902(c)(1)(B) stipulates that, in the program rules, the Assistant Secretary:

- establish a method for identifying which eligible recipients in anchor communities have the greatest unmet financial need.
- ensure that grants under the Pilot Program are made
 - to eligible recipients identified under the method established above, and in a manner that best achieves the purposes of the Pilot Program.
 - require that an eligible recipient that receives a grant to provide broadband internet access service and eligible equipment to students prioritizes students who:
 - (I) are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant under section 401 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 16 U.S.C. 1070a);
 - (II) are recipients of any other need-based financial aid from the Federal Government, a State, or that eligible recipient;
 - (III) are qualifying low-income consumers for the purposes of the program carried out under 47 C.F.R. Part 54, Subpart E;
 - (IV) are low-income individuals, as that term is defined in section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058(g)); or
 - (V) have been approved to receive unemployment insurance benefits under any Federal or State law since March 1, 2020.

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 | Grant Programs

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Grants:

Grants "To expand access to and adoption of – (A) broadband service on Tribal land; or (B) remote learning, telework, or telehealth resources during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Tribal governments, Tribal organizations, TCUs, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Community, and Native Corporations (subgrantees allowed)

 Who are eligible recipients?

Infrastructure (including submarine cable landing stations), affordability programs, telehealth, distance learning, digital inclusion efforts, broadband adoption activities

 What can the grants be used for?

Broadband Infrastructure Program Grants:

Grants for covered broadband projects, defined as competitively and technologically neutral projects for the deployment of fixed broadband service in a census block with at least one household or business that does not have access to 25/3 Mbps service.

Partnerships between a state, or one or more political subdivisions of a state, and providers of fixed broadband service. ETC designation is not required.

Infrastructure

Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program:

Grants to eligible recipients in anchor communities for the purchase of broadband internet access service or any eligible equipment, or to hire and train information technology personnel.

Historically Black and Tribal colleges and universities, Minority-serving institutions, and minority business enterprises and nonprofits.

Devices, service, adoption/digital literacy, hiring/training technology personnel (not infrastructure)

 When does the application open?

Please check our website at <https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/> for updates on the application timeline as they become available.

Thank you for attending

- The slides, transcript, and a recording will be posted on the BroadbandUSA website by March 24.

<https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/past-event>

Join again us next month

NTIA Grant Programs Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021

April 21, 2021

2:00 pm EDT

Registration is required for each webinar and is limited to 1,000:

<https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/event>