Connectivity for Rural and Tribal Libraries

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Arizona State Library

- A Division of the Secretary of State – Arizona
- State Library Branches take care of
  - Archives and Public Records
  - Arizona Talking Book Library
  - E-rate – reimbursements for internet and internal connections Broadband related projects
  - Library Development including Digital Inclusion, Online Resources, Tribal Libraries
  - Law and Research
What is E-Rate?

- A program that reimburses Schools and Public Libraries, up to 90%, for their internet services (Category 1) and internal connections (Category 2).
- Amount reimbursed based on the National School Lunch Program
- The list of Eligible Services is posted on annually around November on the USAC website [https://www.usac.org/e-rate/](https://www.usac.org/e-rate/)
- Applications have to be submitted annually around March, although the process begins way before that.
- There is no budget limit on Category 1 services. Category 2 services have a five-year budget, based on student count (schools) or square footage (libraries). The current five-year budget cycle runs from FY2021 to FY2025
Application process for the E-Rate Program

**470**
Request services (FCC Form 470), run a competitive bid process, and select a vendor

**471**
Request funding (FCC Form 471) and undergo application review

**486**
Confirm the start of services and status of CIPA compliance (FCC Form 472)

**472 (BEAR)**
Request reimbursements (FCC Form 472)
OR receive discounts (FCC Form 474)

**474 (SPI)**

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**Competitive Bidding**
July 1, 2023 to February 2024*

**Apply for Discounts**
January 2024* to March 2024*

**Start Services**
July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

**Invoice USAC**
Recurring Services
July 2024 – October 2025*
Non-recurring Services
July 2024 – January 2026*

* Date ranges reflect a typical timeline and are subject to change
Tribal Libraries and E-rate

➢ ATALM* tribal digital inclusion survey:
  • 38% were not too familiar with the E-rate
  • 30% were not sure they were eligible
  • 13% said application process too complicated
  • 12% said they had applied

➢ Issue: Must be recognized as a public library by the State and eligible for LSTA $$
  ❑ Tribal libraries are often autonomous entities, thus not always eligible

*Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums

This jurisdictional conflict impedes tribal libraries from using the E-rate. --ATALM
• 2018 Institute of Museum and Library Services Act made tribal libraries eligible for LSTA grants (PL 115-410)

• 2022 FCC makes tribal libraries eligible for E-rate, if they met the following three requirements: Regular hours; Staff; Materials for library users

• Initiated a Tribal Libraries pilot program to provide one-on-one support, group training sessions specifically for participants, and E-Rate program trainings covering the program basics and processes. Offers detailed support on all facets of the program

• 2024 applications open now. Contact Gem Labarta at TribalLiaison@usac.org

An entity is “Tribal” for purposes of E-Rate funding if it is a school operated by or receiving funding from the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), or if it is a school or library operated by any Tribe, Band, Nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska native village, regional corporation, or village corporation (as defined in, or established pursuant to, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1601 et seq.)) that is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.
Tribal College and University Libraries

- Tribal College and University (TCU) Libraries eligible for E-rate when serving as a public library.
- Tribal Authority designates a "tribal library". No approval needed from the State Library. The TCU library must have library staff, operate regular hours, and have a collection available for public use in its community.
- E-rate requests must be limited to the needs of the library (not the larger TCU).
- C2 equipment must be installed within the eligible library and not in another location within the TCU.
Enhanced Training for Tribal Libraries

Enhance training is directed to be provided by USAC.

- Where possible, USAC is encouraged to conduct hands-on, in-person training opportunities, as suggested by ALA.
- Provide specific support for TCU libraries.
- Identify and conduct outreach to first-time Tribal applicants.
- Post guidance on how to properly set up a library in EPC when the Tribal government, rather than the library, is the billed entity.

Upcoming Trainings

E-Rate Fall Training: EPC Administrative Window

Date: Thursday, October 19, 2023
Time: 02:00 pm ET – 03:00 pm ET

Register Here

Overview

USAC will discuss the EPC Administrative Window, the period during which applicants can make updates to their profile information in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC), to prepare for the upcoming FCC Form 471 application filing window. After the presentation, we will conduct a Q&A session.

Webinars - Universal Service Administrative Company (usac.org)

Tribal Training Presentations Archive - Universal Service Administrative Company (usac.org)
Budget Increase for Tribal Library

- FCC increased the maximum Category 2 Internal Connection discount rate from 85% to 90% for Tribal libraries.
- FCC increased the C2 funding floor from $25,000 to $55,000 for Tribal libraries. Category 2 library budget based on total square-footage (at $4.50 per sq.ft.).
- C2 bid exemption for services <$3,600. Purchases must still be cost-effective and will be subject to review by USAC for cost-effectiveness.
- Added a Tribal representative to USAC Board.

The FCC, “Encourages USAC to conduct in-person training, as suggested by ALA.”
--FCC 2023 Order
Relief from Cost Allocation for All Applicants

Cost Allocation is not required when ineligible usage of internet is limited to **10% or less of total usage**.

- “Safe harbor” - When at least 90% of an applicant’s requested Internet service is being used for eligible purposes, the remaining ineligible use of the Internet service will be presumed to be ancillary and, therefore, cost allocation is not required.

- Cabling primarily used for distributing broadband does not require cost allocation even when ineligible equipment such as security cameras may be attached to the network.
Timeline to apply

Start now for the cycle beginning July 1 2024- June 30 2025.

- Needs assessment – meet with your stakeholders. Do you have the bandwidth you need? When did you last upgrade your internal connections? Do you have an existing contract?
- Is higher bandwidth available and affordable?
- Who will have to approve any changes?
- Check the Eligible Services List posted each year on the USAC website www.USAC.org/sl in Nov.
- Who creates the RFPs/ FCC Form 470? Who approves it? Who posts it?
- What if we don’t receive any responses to the RFP during the 28 day wait period?
- What do I do if I receive multiple responses? Criteria for selecting a service provider.
- Who signs contracts? By when should I get it signed?
- Posting FCC Form 471 by the Application deadline (in March)
- Wait for review and Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL)
- Start services – either ask the SPI (Service Provider Invoices) billing or BEAR (Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement)
- Billing and receiving the funding.
Questions?

• Will take questions after Nicole’s presentation.

• Over to Nicole’s presentation on the new Broadband Funding.
Internet For All - Arizona
The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests ~$65B to ensure everyone in America has access to high-speed Internet

Goal is to build infrastructure that provides reliable high-speed Internet access to all Americans for today and tomorrow... 

...with a focus on making high-speed Internet affordable and reliable so everyone can participate in the economy... 

... and providing the resources needed to equitably expand the adoption and use of the Internet so everyone can experience the benefits.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Act invests roughly $65B into high-speed Internet efforts through 7 federal programs:

Administered by NTIA
- Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program ($42.45B)
- Digital Equity Planning, Capacity and Competitive Grants ($2.75B)
- Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program ($2.00B)
- Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program ($1.0B)

Administered by other federal agencies
- Affordable Connectivity Program ($14.2B)
- Rural Broadband Programs at the Department of Agriculture ($2.0B)
- Private Activity Bonds ($0.6B)
NTIA is administering ~$48B through four programs that drive high-speed Internet access, affordability, and adoption.

**NTIA will administer ~$48B of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEAD</strong></td>
<td>$42.45B</td>
<td><strong>Broadband Equity, Access &amp; Deployment Program</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it to and increase adoption of high-speed Internet.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIGITAL EQUITY</strong></td>
<td>$2.75B</td>
<td><strong>Digital Equity Act</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed Internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRIBAL</strong></td>
<td>$2.00B</td>
<td><strong>Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>A program to help tribal communities expand high-speed Internet access and adoption on tribal lands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE MILE</strong></td>
<td>$1.00B</td>
<td><strong>Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FCC to administer $14.2B**

- For Affordable Connectivity Program, which replaced the EBB program
- Via the Rural Utilities Service

**USDA to administer $2.0B**

- Via the Rural Utilities Service

**Private Activity Bonds $0.6B**

- Authorizes State and local governments to use private activity bonds for rural broadband
The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) added $2 billion to the existing TBCP and relaxed time requirements of the original program. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 created the TBCP and allocated $980 million for high-speed internet deployment in Tribal communities.

Entities eligible to apply include tribal entities, Native Hawaiian communities and Alaskan native entities.

A second NOFO will open this year and include:

🌟 Approximately $1 billion in grant funding

🎉 Application period open for 6 months starting in 2023

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**
TBCP Awardee Map
(BroadbandUSA.ntia.doc.gov)
BEAD program will provide ~$42.45B for infrastructure planning and implementation

**Funding pool**

$42.45B

A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it to and increase adoption of high-speed Internet.

**Entities eligible to apply for this program include:**
- All 50 States
- The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico
- Other Territories: U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

**Example eligible uses of funds include:**
- Planning for deployment of Internet
- Deploying or upgrading Internet
- Installing Internet in multi-tenant buildings
- Implementing adoption and digital equity programs
- Workforce and job training

**ESTIMATED TIMELINE**

**Timeline approximate unless exact date specified**

2022

NOFO live 5/13

Due 7/18

Due 270 days after planning funds received

Due 2023

5-year plan

LOI

2024

Due 180 days after new DATA maps and notice of fundings amounts issued

Due 2025

4-year implementation

Final proposal

Due 365 days after initial proposal approval

Due 2026+

5-year plan

Initial proposal

Final proposal

2026+
ARIZONA: $993.1 MILLION FOR AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICE
BEAD will prioritize complete coverage of unserved locations and underserved locations (where funding permits), then CAIs.

First, Eligible Entities must serve all unserved locations (incl. serving multi-tenant buildings)
- **Unserved locations** without reliable Internet and with download speeds <25 Mbps, upload speeds <3 Mbps, and latency < 100ms

Second, Eligible Entities must serve all underserved locations
- **Underserved locations** without reliable Internet and with download speeds <100 Mbps, upload speeds <20 Mbps, and latency <100 ms

Next, NTIA strongly urges Eligible Entities serve Eligible Community Anchor Institutions
- **Eligible Community Anchor Institutions** are entities (e.g., school, library, hospital) that facilitate greater use of high-speed Internet service by vulnerable populations and have download speed <1 Gbps
- **Other eligible uses** include affordability programs, cybersecurity training, workforce development., etc.
- If an Eligible Entity wants to use funds for other eligible uses instead of eligible Community Anchor Institutions, then it must provide a strong rationale.
The BEAD Program will include a low-cost broadband service option for all Eligible Subscribers.

- **Eligible Subscriber** means any household that qualifies for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) or a successor program.

Eligible Entities will define the parameters for low-cost plans while considering the following:

- Provider participation in the Affordable Connectivity Program or other household subsidies
- Expected cost to an Eligible Subscriber after subsidies
- Technical performance of the plan (e.g., Internet speed)

- **Cost:** ≤$30 incl. taxes and fees (≤$75 for tribal land residents)
- **Subsidies:** Can apply Affordable Connectivity Benefit subsidies
- **Speed:** ≥100 Mbps for downloads and ≥20 Mbps for uploads
- **Latency:** ≤100 ms
- **Extra fees:** No data caps or surcharges
- **Upgrades:** Can later upgrade to new low-cost offerings at no cost

Please see the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) website for more details on the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) [link](#).
Digital Equity Act created 3 programs for digital equity and inclusion

**Funding pool**

$2.75B

Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed Internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.

**State Planning**
- $60M formula funding program to develop digital equity plans

**State Capacity**
- $1.44B formula funding program to implement plans & promote digital inclusion

**Competitive**
- $1.25B to implement digital equity and inclusion activities

### Example eligible uses of funds include:

- Developing digital equity plans; states must develop a plan to be eligible for state capacity grants
- Making awards to other entities to help make digital equity plans
- Improving accessibility and inclusivity of public resources
- Implementing digital equity plans and related activities
- Providing digital literacy and digital skills education
- Facilitating the adoption of high-speed Internet

### ESTIMATED TIMELINE

- **NOFO published 5/13**
- **State applications submitted 7/12**

2022
- Planning app

2023
- 1-year state planning
- State cap. app

2024
- Competitive Program launches within 1 month of first Capacity awards

2025
- 5-year state capacity implementation
- Comp. app

2026+
- 4-year competitive implement.

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified.
The Digital Equity Act creates two distinct but correlated state formula grant programs, and a third competitive grant program.

**State Planning Grant**
- **Who:** Open to U.S. States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico and Tribal Entities
- **What:** Grants will be used to develop a State Digital Equity Plan
- **Funding:** $60 million

**State Capacity Grant**
- **Who:** Open to U.S. States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, that completed the State Planning Program
- **What:** Grants will be used to implement State Digital Equity Plans
- **Funding:** $1.44 billion

**Competitive Grant**
- **Who:** Open to Tribal entities
- **What:** Grants will be used to develop and implement digital inclusion activities
- **Funding:** $1.25 billion

Other U.S. territories, Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian orgs have a separate statutory set-aside and separate program requirements under the State Planning and Capacity Programs, as detailed on the next page.
The digital inclusion activities planned and implemented under these Programs build towards achieving digital equity.

Digital Inclusion activities collectively build to advance and ensure digital equity.

Affordable, robust broadband service

Internet-enabled devices that meet user needs

Applications and online content

Access to digital literacy training

Quality technical support

Measures to ensure online privacy & cybersecurity

Quality technical support

Access to digital literacy training

Applications and online content

Internet-enabled devices that meet user needs

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Applications and online content
Digital inequity disproportionally impacts our stakeholders

**DE & BEAD**

**Covered Populations and Underrepresented Communities**

*Identity groups and communities disproportionally impacted by digital inequity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low-income households</th>
<th>Indigenous and Native American persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aging individuals</td>
<td>Members of ethnic and religious minorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarcerated individuals</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>LGBTQI+ persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons of Color</td>
<td>Persons with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People with language barriers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Racial and ethnic minorities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural inhabitants</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DE NOFO**

**BEAD NOFO**
Every stakeholder plays a role in Internet For All

**Telecom provider**
- Apply to be a BEAD subgrantee
- Note: Telecom providers may include government-owned entities

**Community anchor institution**
- Benefit from BEAD funding for faster Internet
- Advocate for community interests across programs

**Local government**
- Collaborate with states during BEAD planning

**Community orgs**
- Coordinate on planning and execution
- Advocate for community interests across programs

**Tribal government**
- Coordinate, consult, and partner with states during BEAD planning

**Community orgs**
- Coordinate on planning and execution
- Advocate for community interests across programs

**Individual**
- Participate in digital skill and literacy courses funded by programs
- Contact local reps for more information

Illustrative, non-exhaustive
There are many ways Tribal entities can participate in the Internet for All programs

**Ways to get involved:**

- **BEAD**
  - Engage with States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico as these entities conduct ongoing local coordination
  - Serve as a subgrantee and carry out BEAD activities

- **Digital Equity**
  - Apply directly for grant funds set-aside for Tribal entities under the Digital Equity Act
  - Engage with States as they conduct ongoing local coordination and develop their State Digital Equity Plans

- **Middle Mile**
  - Apply directly for grant funds under the Middle Mile Program
State Digital Equity Plans
State Digital Equity Plan components (I/II)

1. The **identification of the barriers to digital equity** faced by covered populations

2. **Measurable objectives for documenting & promoting** broadband technology; the online accessibility of public resources and services; digital literacy; secure online privacy / cybersecurity; consumer devices and tech support

3. An assessment of how the **objectives will impact and interact** with the State’s economic and workforce goals; health, education and civic engagement outcomes; and delivery of other essential services

4. A description of how the State **plans to collaborate with key stakeholders** (e.g., anchor institutions, municipal government, educational agencies, non-profits) to achieve objectives

5. A list of organizations with which the administering entity for the State **collaborated in developing and implementing the Plan**

6. A stated **vision for digital equity**

7. A **digital equity needs assessment**, including an assessment of the baseline and the State’s identification of the barriers to digital equity
State Digital Equity Plan components (II/II)

1. **An asset inventory**, including current resources and strategies that promote digital equity and existing digital equity plans and programs.

2. A **coordination and outreach strategy**, including opportunities for public comment by, collaboration with, and ongoing engagement with the covered populations and the full range of stakeholders.

3. Description of how **municipal, regional, and/or tribal digital plans will be incorporated**.

4. An **implementation strategy** (1) establishing measurable goals, objectives, proposed core activities, (2) setting out measures ensuring the plan’s sustainability, and (3) adopting mechanisms to ensure that the plan is regularly evaluated and updated.

5. Explanation of how the strategy **addresses gaps in existing efforts** to address barriers to digital equity.

6. Description of how the State intends to accomplish the implementation strategy by **partnering with workforce organizations and institutions of higher learning**.

7. A **timeline** for implementation of the Plan.

8. Material indicating how the State will coordinate its use of Digital Equity Capacity Grant funding and Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding.
Introduction to BEAD Challenge Process
Local Governments are involved throughout the entire Initial Proposal timeline, as they will provide public comment on the BEAD Challenge Process and participate in it as well. Note that timelines will be dependent on the Eligible Entity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Proposal (IP) Drafting</th>
<th>IP Public Comment Period</th>
<th>IP Review and Approval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Governments will provide feedback on their state or territory’s BEAD Challenge Process.</td>
<td>State/Territory Runs BEAD Challenge Process</td>
<td>Local Governments can participate in their State/Territory’s BEAD Challenge Process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subgrantee Selection Process</td>
<td>Local Governments can apply to be subgrantees in the BEAD Program.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Key**
- **State/Territory/SBO Activity**
- **Local Government/Organization Activity**

**Timeline Diagram**

[Diagram showing the timeline with key events and activities]
The BEAD Challenge Process is vital because it determines the **locations and community anchor institutions** within each jurisdiction that are **eligible for BEAD funding**.

### Key step toward achieving BEAD goals

Before the BEAD program can meet the goal of providing accessible and affordable broadband, all unserved locations, underserved locations, and eligible Community Anchor Institutions must be identified.

### Helps ensure accurate results

An evidence-based, fair, transparent, and expeditious BEAD Challenge Process, as outlined in the NOFO and Challenge Process Policy Notice, helps ensure accurate results, an efficient process, and a precise allocation of resources.

### Gathers information needed before running the subgrantee selection

The subgrantee selection process cannot be run without first having an accurate and comprehensive list of eligible locations and CAIs.
Local Government Involvement in the BEAD Challenge Process

There are many ways for local governments to stay involved throughout the process and ensure their communities are served.

**Participate in the Challenge Process**
Local governments are one of three eligible challengers, in addition to non-profits and Internet Service Providers (ISPs), who can participate in the BEAD Challenge process. This is the opportunity for local government units to impact where BEAD funding is directed within their state/territory. Local governments are encouraged to participate in the BEAD Challenge Process by submitting challenges to their State/Territory Broadband Office's BEAD Challenge Process.

**Participate in the Public Comment Period**
Your state/territory broadband office (SBO) will design and implement the BEAD Challenge Process. Participate in your SBO's Public Comment period on their Challenge Process and contact them for more information on how to get involved. For contact information visit the IF contact map at https://www.internetforall.gov/interactive-map

**Represent Individuals**
If individuals want to submit a challenge, they must do so by contacting an eligible challenger to submit on their behalf. A local government could aggregate such challenges and submit these on the individuals' behalf.

**Register for the Challenge Process Webinar**
Local governments can register for the NTIA Challenge Process public webinar for more information (date TBD).
THANK YOU

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