

District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO)

**NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)
RFA # RFA-FY24-WPD-836**

Construction of a DC Government-Owned Middle-Mile and Last Mile Fiber Asset,
a CPF Broadband Infrastructure Project
(Short Name: Ward 5 CPF Project)
RFA-FY24-WPD-836

RFA Publication Date: [June 27, 2025]

Application Submission Deadline: [July 18, 2025] at 11:59 p.m.

Application Submission Platform: wdcbroadband.submittable.com

Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Technology Officer
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SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

Access to, and adoption of, reliable broadband is essential to full participation in the community and economy. A reliable broadband connection enables work, learning, healthcare, and more equitable access to government services. In DC, the need for broadband infrastructure investment is deepest in Wards 5, 7, and 8—those regions within DC which have the lowest broadband adoption rates and highest rates of poverty according to American Community Survey (“ACS”) data, and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (“NTIA”) publicly available Indicators of Broadband Need Map.

The DC Office of the Chief Technology Officer (“OCTO”) proposes to address this need by coordinating resources from multiple federal funding programs, along with existing DC government resources, to effect a transformative, equitable, sustainable, and achievable improvement in DC’s broadband infrastructure in Ward 5 through the U.S. Treasury’s Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (“CPF”). This RFA is limited to OCTO’s Ward 5 CPF project.

OCTO manages DC-Net, DC government’s all-fiber network. Since 2005, DC-Net has provided telecommunications services to the DC government, federal agencies, eligible community anchor institutions (“CAI”), and directly to the public through operation of over 700 public Wi-Fi hot spots. Through Treasury’s CPF program, OCTO proposes to greatly increase DC-Net’s capacity to serve the public both directly through greater broadband service offerings at CAIs, and indirectly, through greater affordability, performance, and product variety in commercial home and mobile internet offerings in Ward 5.

1.2 Purpose of Grant

The objective of this CPF Broadband Infrastructure Project is the creation of new government owned and operated middle mile and last mile broadband infrastructure capital assets in Ward 5 (“OCTO Project Property”), as well as the creation of new privately owned and operated middle mile and last mile capital assets in Ward 5, which will be made subject to permanent affordability and performance standards (“Grantee Project Property”). The operation of these new capital assets will directly enable greater access to work, education, and health-monitoring within the proposed geographic area for the life of the assets.

Through this CPF program, OCTO proposes to purchase and provide for the installation of physical broadband infrastructure including conduit and fiber in public rights of way, and to purchase and install network equipment in one or more CAIs in Ward 5. This will enable DC-Net to provide a 10 Gbps symmetrical connection between the Trinidad Recreation Center in Ward 5 and the backbone of the global internet through DC’s open-access Internet Exchange Point (“IXP”). Additionally, this will enable DC-Net to provide wholesale fiber backhaul and middle mile service to Ward 5 retail internet providers who commit to DC’s performance and affordability standards, and who offer fiber to the premises, fixed location wireless, or mobile wireless plans to Ward 5 residents.

DC's affordability standards require the Awardee to offer eligible Ward 5 DC residents a reduced cost broadband internet access service plan. The minimum requirements for the Low-Cost Consumer Broadband Plan ("Low Cost Plan") to be offered to eligible Ward 5 DC residents are the following:

- a. An eligible Ward 5 DC resident's address is within the shaded area ("Service Area") in Figure 1.2, and the household meets at least one of the following requirements:
 - Household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines;
 - Anyone in the household, including children or dependents, participates in certain government assistance programs like SNAP, Medicaid, WIC, Federal Housing Assistance or others;
 - Anyone in the household participates in the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program;
 - Anyone in the household received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
 - Anyone in the household already receives a Lifeline benefit; or
 - The household already participates in one of the Awardee's existing low-income programs.
- b. Household must be permitted to apply DC or federal broadband subsidies to the Low Cost Plan service price.
- c. A 100 Mbps symmetrical bandwidth speed internet access plan that costs \$30 or less per month, including all allowable taxes, fees, etc.
- d. Must not be subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling and is subject only to the same acceptable use policies which apply to all of Awardee's residential broadband internet access service plans.
- e. Latency measurements must not exceed 100 milliseconds.
- f. If Awardee later offers a new reduced cost broadband service plan with higher speeds downstream and/or upstream, eligible Low Cost Plan subscribers must be permitted to subscribe to the new reduced cost plan with higher speeds.
- g. Must be offered through December 31, 2034 (the end of the federal interest in broadband infrastructure constructed using CPF funds).

This program will result in:

- **New retail last mile** fiber to the premises, fixed location wireless, and mobile wireless offerings available in Ward 5, and subject to performance and affordability standards, including a requirement to offer a reduced cost residential broadband internet service plan (Low Cost Plan);

- **Greatly improved DC-Net last mile service** to one or more CAIs in Ward 5, free of existing contractually imposed prohibitions on providing service to residents, businesses, and national non-profits;
- **New DC-owned and -operated middle mile fiber and conduit**, which will be used to drive affordability, reliability, product variety, and network resilience, and create an ongoing project income stream which can be used to further expand DC-Net fiber and conduit infrastructure throughout the City; and,
- **New privately owned and operated middle mile fiber and conduit**, subject to performance and affordability standards, including a requirement to offer a reduced cost broadband internet access service to eligible households.

By building ***DC-owned conduit and fiber*** that extends the entire route between end points and the IXP, DC's ability to push last mile investment and to implement an even broader array of digital equity programming in Ward 5 will be greatly increased. *See* Figure 1.2. Further, this link will enable DC-Net to connect multiple fiber rings used to serve other CAIs, creating a new path that can be used to offer greater path diversity and increase the reliability of last mile service to all DC-Net customers.

DC's new capital assets will include:

- **12,755 feet of 4-inch conduit x 12 for a total of 153,060 feet:** These durable, 4-inch diameter tubes are used to house telecommunications cable—in this case, fiber optic cable—underground. Conduit is a very long-lived capital asset, and as technology improves year over year, and decade over decade, new telecommunication cable can be threaded through existing conduit at marginal cost, and without the need for new digging, construction, or repaving;
- **22,355 feet of 864-fiber cable:** Fiber optic cable is a telecommunications cable made up of multiple strands of glass which delivers massive bandwidth at low cost, with a very long useful life. Fiber optic cable is the current gold standard both for data transmission between last mile users and IXPs, and for data backhaul from wireless antennas to IXPs;
- **57 manholes:** Manholes are physical structures installed within the right of way to provide direct access to the conduit network at regular intervals, enabling regular maintenance without the cost of digging, construction, or repaving. They are used to connect conduit pathways, and as points to pull and splice telecommunications cable as needed;
- **4 Ciena DWDM, 6500 series:** Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing multi-port, multi-protocol packet-optical platforms provide hand-offs at bandwidths between 10 Gbps and 100 Gbps. These units would be deployed in one or more CAIs and provide high-bandwidth, low-latency circuits through fiber for high volume voice, video, and data traffic;
- **4 Ciena CESD, 5160 Series:** Carrier Ethernet Service Delivery service aggregation switches provide hand-offs at bandwidths up to 10 Gbps. These units would be deployed

in one or more CAIs for low- to mid-level volume of voice, video, and data traffic circuits to providers;

- **4 Cisco Management, Cisco Catalyst L3:** These network switches would be installed in one or more CAIs, and would provide a management and provisioning platform. These units will be used for circuit provisioning, and monitoring services for 24x7 support and operational activities;
- **4 Wireless Management, Cisco Access Point:** These wireless access points would be installed in one or more CAIs, and would provide Wi-Fi on premises to access and manage network infrastructure; and,
- **Cisco ASR 9K platform:** These routers would be installed in one or more CAIs, and would provide redundant Internet and Data services through DC-Net Internet Ring.

Figure 1.2 DC-Net Proposed Conduit Location and Service Area

Map of location of Trinidad Rec Center and IXP available at:

https://www.techtogetherdc.com/files/ugd/9d0000_82542fe692b5409a966e9e328437cc15.pdf

1.3 Source of Funds

The United States Department of the Treasury's Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund.

1.4 Competition for a Grant

This RFA is competitive. Each Applicant must demonstrate its ability to carry out the activities for the grant for which it applies (called a "project"). A review panel will evaluate the applications for each advertised grant according to the stated list of criteria in each project's description. The most responsive application(s) will be recommended for a grant.

Specifically, an award will be made based on eligibility (Section 1.6), the extent to which the proposed project fits within the scope and available funding of the grant, strength of the application, and the organization's capacity to achieve the grant's goals.

Each Applicant may submit more than one application with different projects. If an Applicant responds with more than one project, it must do so in a separate proposal and submit all corresponding required documents.

1.5 Projects and Funds Available

OCTO seeks applications for:

Project Name	Project Amount
Ward 5 CPF Project	\$15,000,000
Grantee Match	\$5,000,000 or more

1.6 Eligibility Information

1.6.1 Eligible Applicants

The following are eligible to apply if an “X” appears:

- ☒ Nonprofit organizations, including those with IRS 501I(3) or 501(c)(4) determinations
- ☒ Faith-based organizations
- ☐ Government agencies
- ☒ Universities/educational institutions
- ☒ Private enterprises

Continuing conditions of eligibility include the following: the information in the application is and remains complete and truthful; and that the Applicant, at all times, is able to meet material conditions stated in its application. Ineligible applicants or applications will not be considered for review.

A material condition can be 1) an eligibility condition, 2) the availability of a Low Cost Plan, or 3) it can be some other condition that a reasonable OCTO evaluator would conclude is necessary to the Applicant for carrying out the proposed project.

For instance, consider a hypothetical case where an Applicant’s nonprofit status was a condition of eligibility, and the Applicant lost its nonprofit tax status. That would be a material change in condition and would require immediate communication. Another example of such a material change in condition would include an Applicant whose ability to fulfill the terms of the grant is based on the availability of skilled staff. If such skilled staff are no longer available, the Applicant must immediately inform OCTO and follow up in writing.

1.6.2 Additional Eligibility Requirements

- **Funding Match Requirement:** The Applicant must contribute at least \$5,000,000 to planning, digging, construction, and repaving along the route extending from Trinidad Recreation Center to the IXP.
- **Investment in New Conduit and Fiber:** The Applicant must install its own new conduit and fiber along the route, and offer retail service to residents within range of the route that meets or exceeds DC's performance and affordability standards, including the Low Cost Plan. The size and scope of this investment in Ward 5 relative to other bids would be a key factor in evaluating competitive bids;
- **Community Engagement:** The Applicant will be required to engage in community outreach to make the community aware of the Low Cost Plan, the prevailing bidder's new service offerings, and to address the underlying barriers to broadband adoption within Ward 5;
- **Data Production:** The Applicant will be required to gather and maintain adoption rate data, broadband availability data, subscriber feedback, and pricing data, which must be provided to OCTO on a regular basis, to aid OCTO in supporting the FCC's maintenance of its Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric, and in OCTO's own long-term broadband and digital equity planning; and,
- **Fair Labor and Equitable Workforce Development:** The Applicant will be required to demonstrate long-term compliance with federal and local labor laws and will be required to disclose its plans for advancing diversity and inclusion, as well as equitable workforce development and job quality goals.

1.7 Definitions

“District” or “DC”: The District of Columbia.

“Grantee”: The person provided a grant by the District, including a sub-grantee.

“Person”: A natural person or a legal entity, including a partnership, firm, association, joint venture, public or private corporation, trust, estate, commission, board, public or private institution, cooperative, the District government and its agencies, and the federal government and its agencies.

“Writing”: A tangible or electronic record of a communication or representation, including handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostat, fax, photography, word processing computer output, and e-mail. A “signed” writing includes an electronic symbol or process attached to, or logically associated with a writing, and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the writing.

1.8 Permissible Use of Grant Funds

A Grantee may use grant funds only for allowable grant expenditures. Grant funds related to work performed will be provided on a reimbursement basis, except that, in limited circumstances, an advance of funds may be provided for grant administration expenses for a good cause approved by OCTO at its sole discretion. (See Sections 3.1 and 6.2; Appendix 1 Paragraph 11.g).

In addition to any specific funding restrictions described in this RFA, all Awardees must expend grant funds in accordance with the cost principles delineated by the City Wide Grants Manual and Sourcebook: [Documents and Orders | oca](#) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements \(2 CFR 200\)](#).

1.9 Grant Monitoring

In its sole discretion, OCTO may use several methods to monitor the grant, including site visits, periodic financial reports, and the collection of performance data. Each grant is subject to audit. The purpose of these monitoring efforts is to evaluate the grantee's adherence to both District and federal requirements. The goal is to determine the adequacy of the Applicant's operational, financial, and management systems and practices in accounting for program funds. Failure to meet compliance standards may lead to payment suspension, reduction, or termination of the subgrant.

OCTO retains the authority to carry out on-site visits at any time during the grant period and may request supporting documentation for all data metrics and performance results. Reimbursement requests may be delayed until the verification of all submitted data.

Applicants affirmatively consent to grant monitoring, such as site visits, data collections, financial reporting, and retention of records used in support of grant monitoring and audits for the audit period (3 years from the date of final OCTO payment of the Grant, or the end of the District fiscal year in which the Grant ends, whichever is later). (See Appendix 1, Section 25. Accounting and Audits).

1.10 Federal Interest in Broadband Infrastructure

For broadband infrastructure projects funded with the CPF and substantially completed by December 31, 2026, the federal interest in CPF broadband infrastructure will last until December 31, 2034 ("Federal Interest Period"). Title to real property or equipment acquired or improved under the award, OCTO Project Property (i.e., the broadband infrastructure installed pursuant to the Grantee's subaward or contract with the recipient), vests in OCTO, subject to the condition that, for the duration of the Federal Interest Period, OCTO and any successors or transferees comply with the requirements below. Title to real property or equipment acquired or improved under the award for the benefit of the Grantee, Grantee Project Property, vests in the Grantee, subject to the condition that, for the duration of the Federal Interest Period, the Grantee and any successors or transferees:

- (1) must use the Project Property for the authorized purposes of the project in the same manner as they use comparable real property and equipment within their networks in the ordinary course of their business, subject to the rights to disposition provided below,
- (2) must continue to provide internet service to the service areas and at the standard initially agreed upon by OCTO and Grantee,
- (3) must participate in federal programs that provide low-income consumers with subsidies on broadband internet access services in the service areas and at the standard initially agreed upon by OCTO and Grantee,
- (4) must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.310 (Insurance), which may be satisfied by adequate self-insurance,
- (5) must comply with the use and management requirements for equipment in 2 CFR §§ 200.313(c)(4) and 313(d), which may be satisfied by applying the ISP's commercial practices for meeting such requirements in the normal course of business (e.g., commercial inventory controls, loss prevention procedures, etc.), provided that such inventory controls indicate the applicable federal interest,
- (6) must maintain records of real property that include an indication of the applicable federal interest,
- (7) may dispose of Project Property in the ordinary course of business when no longer needed to operate the network, such as in order to upgrade equipment and improve facilities, provided that at least the same level of service provided by the network is maintained and there is no material interruption to service and that such upgraded property is subject to the same requirements provided in this guidance as other Project Property,
- (8) may otherwise sell or transfer Project Property only after provision of notice to Treasury that identifies the successor or transferee and after securing the agreement of the successor or transferee to comply with these requirements and the acknowledgement of the successor or transferee of the federal property interest, and
- (9) must notify OCTO and Treasury upon the filing of a petition under the Bankruptcy Code, whether voluntary or involuntary, with respect to the Grantee or its affiliates.

1.11 General Terms and Conditions

Appendix 1, "General Terms and Conditions" is incorporated by reference in this RFA. Applicants and Grantees must comply with any and all applicable terms and conditions appearing in Appendix 1. **OCTO's Authority to Make Grants**

OCTO has grant-making and subgrant-making authority under:

- Function, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, DC Official Code §§ 1-1403(10)-(13).

- Digital Equity Planning and Reporting, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, DC Official Code § 1–1403.01(b)(2), (c).
- Other applicable laws and regulations.

1.12 Conflicts between RFA and Applicable Law

If any requirement of this RFA conflicts with a provision of any applicable law, including a District or federal law or regulation, the applicable legal provision shall control.

SECTION 2. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

2.1 RFA Release Date

Request for Proposal (“RFP”) Publication Date: [June 27, 2025].

2.2 Additional RFA Information

This RFA is issued on [www.techtogetherdc.com]. The contact person for this RFA is [Kevin Hughes Broadband Administrator, TechTogether@dc.gov].

2.3 Applications: Submission Information

Deadline: July 18, 2025

All applications must be received at [wdcbroadband.submittable.com] by 11:59 p.m. on July 18, 2025.

Once the application is submitted, an email will be automatically generated stating that the application was received. In OCTO’s [wdcbroadband.submittable.com], the application will be dated and recorded as “received” pending review by OCTO for completeness. OCTO considers an application to be “filed” only if all the required materials are submitted. A late or incomplete application will be considered received, not filed.

Applicants are urged to file timely and not wait until minutes before a deadline.

2.4 Award Announcement

OCTO expects to notify each Applicant in writing of its award status within six to twelve weeks after the application due date.

2.5 Updates and Questions and Answers (Q&A)

Additional information may become available before the application is due. It is the Applicant's responsibility to stay up-to-date on the status and requirements of the grant for which it is applying. OCTO welcomes questions seeking clarification of matters in this RFA.

OCTO will offer one virtual Q&A session to review the proposed RFA and answer any questions. The first session is scheduled for [July 2, 2025] and the Meeting details will be posted at www.techtogetherdc.com.

Questions about the RFA should be sent to TechTogether@dc.gov with "RE: DC CPF RFA Inquiry" in the subject line. OCTO will publish updates and Questions and Answers (Q&A) regarding the RFA at www.techtogetherdc.com. The cutoff date for receipt of any questions is one week prior to the application deadline.

SECTION 3. APPLICATION CONTENT

3.1 Application Content

The objective of this CPF Broadband Infrastructure Project is the creation of a major, new government owned and operated middle mile and last mile broadband infrastructure capital asset in Ward 5, as well as the creation of new privately owned and operated middle mile and last mile capital assets in Ward 5, which will be made subject to permanent affordability and performance standards. The application should, in increasing levels of detail, explain how the Applicant will accomplish this. Please review this RFA carefully for project requirements and commitments (See Sections 1.2 and 1.6.2).

- **Project summary:** Provide a brief one paragraph summary that explains the Applicant's proposed project.
- **RFA narrative:** Enter the project application narrative in the sections provided.
- **Project description:** Organize the Application's narrative to present the proposed project in a logical order and explain "i. Goals and Objectives" through "iv. Project Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes." Applications will be scored using the criteria in the scoring box of Section 7. Double check your application to make sure you have fully responded to all of the scoring criteria.
 - **Goals and objectives:** State how: (a) this broadband project will directly enable work, education, and health monitoring, and (b) achieve the goals in Section 1.2.
 - **Target audience:** Identify the target audience. Whom will this project engage? Whom will this project benefit, and how?

- **Target location:** Please describe the Applicant’s proposed conduit and fiber route in Ward 5 and how the proposed route will overlap with DC-Net’s proposed conduit and fiber route in Ward 5 (*See* Figure 1.2).
- **Project activities, outputs, and outcomes:** Connect the funded activities to quantifiable outputs that produce desired outcomes. OCTO prefers projects that present quantifiable measures. This will show how the project will advance the goal(s) and meet the objective(s). This enables reviewers to evaluate what the proposed project will achieve if funded. Activities describe how the objectives will be accomplished. A description of activities may include quantity, frequency, duration, and location. An output is a short-term quantifiable result that one or more activities achieve. OCTO will measure the outputs to determine if the Grantee successfully implements the activities.
- **Project budget:** Applications must include a numeric budget and a separate budget narrative under the heading “Proposed Project Budget” in the wdcbroadband.submittable.com. The budget narrative must explain and justify every line item in the numeric budget. The explanation should be thorough enough to allow a reviewer to understand why expenditure levels were chosen and how the line-item amounts were derived. For example: “Personnel will be paid \$xx per hour times xx hours.” The budget will be the basis for OCTO’s later evaluation of the project and payment requests. OCTO will require documentation for grant payments, and the entire grant will be subject to audit.
- **OCTO’s standard policy on reimbursements vs. advances:** In the overwhelming majority of cases, OCTO’s policy is to reimburse supported, approved, and allowable expenses. If the Applicant seeks an advance payment, it must request advance payment in its application and explain why an advance payment is requested. (*See* Sections 1.8, and 6.2; Appendix 1, Section 11.g)
- **Grantee matches and other contributions:** Resources provided by the Applicant should appear in the column titled “Non-OCTO Match,” meaning the Applicant intends to provide the indicated resources (*i.e.*, the “match,” and that the resources do not come from OCTO). Applicants are required to contribute at least a \$5,000,000 match to the project. Entries in this column could include both dollars and the value of the in-kind contributions. For example, in-kind contributions can include staff time, volunteer services, already-paid licensing fees, materials, supplies, and the use of equipment or real estate.

The requirements for matching funds are that they MUST:

- Be verifiable from recipient records;
- Not be allocated as contributions for other grant-funded programs;
- Not already come from federal funds unless there is specific authorization; necessary for accomplishing program objectives;

- If the grant is based on any federal funds, be allowable and reasonable according to applicable OMB cost principles; and,
- Be spent during the project period.

Volunteer hours provided to a Grantee or Sub-Grantee must be valued at rates consistent with those the Applicant's organization ordinarily pays for similar work, including salary and fringes. If the Grantee or a Sub-Grantee does not have employees performing similar work, the rates must be valued the same as rates ordinarily paid by employers in the same labor market for similar work.

- **Allowable and non-allowed costs:** The Applicant must show that all costs in the budget are allowable. Typical allowable costs may include, but are not limited to:
 - Rental of office space, some vehicles, and some equipment;
 - Employee salaries and benefits;
 - Contractor labor, including professional services;
 - Accounting and bookkeeping services;
 - Communications, including telephone and data services;
 - Materials and supplies;
 - Some field equipment, typically below \$5,000 in value; and,
 - Insurance.

Non-Allowable costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Most major equipment, like vehicles;
- Lobbying, including salaries and overheads and out-of-pocket expenses;
- Entertainment;
- Interest payments on loans;
- Most food; and,
- Land purchases.

- Applicant's indirect costs calculation

An Applicant may include its indirect costs in its budget calculation. This may be done through the use of a cost rate. In budget backup materials, the Applicant should identify the basis for the calculation, addressing one of the following bases that District law permits it to choose:

1. Its current, unexpired, federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) rate, a negotiated rate with the federal government; OR

2. One of the following methods:

- 15% of the grant's direct costs;
- A new negotiated rate with OCTO;
- The same indirect rate that it has used with any District agency in the past 2 years; or,
- An independent Certified Public Account's (CPA) calculated rate using federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines.

If the Applicant proposes to use the services of a nonprofit Sub-Grantee or contractor, it must propose to apply the same indirect cost rate to that entity's services. (*See Appendix 1. General Terms & Conditions, Paragraph 15.f.*)

Where a conflict exists between applicable rule or law, Federal rules always control for federal funding. For federal funding that passes through the District to the Grantee, the indirect cost rate must be consistent with federal regulation 2 CFR 200.331 or its successor and U.S. Treasury CPF Supplementary Broadband Guidance, available at <http://tinyurl.com/2hajv7ah>.

3.1.1.1 Applicant

1. Organization

Describe the named Applicant's history, mission, and current or past projects that demonstrate the organization's capacity to achieve the project's goals. To provide further information, the applicant can reference its website or upload an organizational brochure or résumé under the heading "Additional Information and Document Uploads" in the wdcbroadband.submittable.com.

2. Key personnel

Identify the key team members for the project and provide brief biographies or their résumés under the heading "Additional Information and Document Uploads" in the wdcbroadband.submittable.com. The team members can be staff, volunteers, Sub-Grantees, or contractors.

3. Past performance on District Grants/Contracts

Identify District agencies from which the Applicant has received funding as a contractor, Grantee, or partner in the past five years under the heading "Additional Information and Document Uploads" in the wdcbroadband.submittable.com. Provide specific information, including:

- The grant(s) or contract(s) title;

- The District agency/agencies;
- The grant number(s), contract number(s), or other identifier(s);
- The amount(s) paid; and,
- What was accomplished as a result of the funding.

Briefly describe each dispute, investigation, and/or audit, if any, related to any of these District grants or contracts, or partnerships in the past five years.

4. Partners

OCTO awards a grant to one entity. When that entity is a legal corporation or partnership, OCTO will award to that entity. Sometimes a “partnership” is informal, just a working arrangement. The “partners” may have decided that multiple participants can improve the success of a project. Such a partnership might be between a government agency, nongovernmental organization (NGO), company, or an individual. One of these “partners” must be identified as the Applicant.

If one or more partners are to be involved in the project, the Applicant must describe each partner’s involvement and resource commitments. The partnering organization should attach a letter of support. If the letter is a hard copy letter or scanned, the document should be written on the partner’s letterhead and signed by its authorized official. If the letter is an email, the email should clearly identify the writer and position, the partner, its mailing address, website, and an official’s contact name, telephone number, and email address.

For the following types of partners, provide the documentation indicated.

i. Property Owner

If the Applicant will work on public land, it must submit a letter of support from an official of the managing agency. Similarly, if the Applicant is to work on private land, it must submit a letter of support from each property owner. If the project includes construction or installation, the letter must acknowledge that the property owner will be responsible (either directly or through an agreement with another entity) for project maintenance.

ii. Partnering Organization

Include a letter of intent from the collaborating organization(s) stating that it agrees to participate in the proposed project, describing the partner’s involvement and resource commitments, and explaining the activities and/or services the partner will provide. The letter should demonstrate that the partnering organization understands the project presented for funding and the activities and/or services that the partner will provide. Under the grant terms and conditions, grant-related work or activity that is contracted, sub-contracted or Sub-Grantee must comply with applicable District laws, including business licensing requirements and documentation of a claimed tax-exempt status.

3.2 Work Plan

The application must include a proposed work plan that describes the project's activities and the timeline for project implementation. Upload the work plan in "Additional Information and Document Uploads" in wdcbroadband.submittable.com.

3.3 Required Documents

The following documents must be filed as part of the application package. If the document is not in this filing, OCTO may classify the grant application as "received" but not "filed," as specified in Section 2.3. However, if a government agency must issue a required document, and the Applicant has requested the document but not received it, OCTO may accept a copy of the Applicant's written request to the agency for the purpose of deeming the Application "filed."

3.3.1 Certificate of Good Standing

Each Applicant must submit a current Certificate of Good Standing from the District Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs. OCTO requires that the submitted Certificate of Good Standing reflects a date within a six-month period immediately preceding the application's submission.

3.3.2 Certificate of Clean Hands

The Applicant shall submit a validated Certificate of Clean Hands (CCH) from the DC Office of Tax and Revenue. The CCH can be obtained through MyTax.DC.gov.

IRS W-9 Tax Form

The Applicant must submit a current completed W-9 form prepared for the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). OCTO defines "current" to mean that the document was completed within the same calendar year as that of the application date.

3.3.3 Tax Exemption Affirmation Letter

If the Applicant claims it is a nonprofit organization, the Applicant must prove its nonprofit status. The tax exemption affirmation letter should be provided. It is the IRS's determination letter of non-profit status. If this letter is not available, then the Applicant should provide its most recent IRS Form 990 tax return, if one was submitted. If no return has yet been filed, the organization can submit its application for tax-exempt status. If the group is a "supporting organization" with an IRS tax-exempt status determination, then that organization's tax exemption affirmation letter should also be submitted.

3.3.4 Applicant's Current Fiscal Year Budget

The Applicant must submit its full budget, including projected income, for the current fiscal year. Also, the Applicant should submit a comparison of budgeted versus actual income and expenses of the fiscal year to date.

3.3.5 Applicant's Financial Statements

If the Applicant has undergone an audit or financial review, it must provide the most recent audited financial statements or reviews. If audited financial statements or reviews are not available, the Applicant must provide its most recent complete year's unaudited financial statements.

3.3.6 Separation of Duties Policy

The Applicant must state how the organization separates financial transactions and duties among people within the organization in order to prevent fraud or waste. This may be a statement that already exists as a formal policy of the organization, or the Applicant may create the statement for purposes of the application. The Applicant should state which of these situations apply.

This statement should:

- Describe how financial transactions are handled and recorded;
- Provide the names or titles of personnel involved in handling money;
- Identify how many signatures the financial institution(s) require on the organization's checks and withdrawal slips; and,
- Address other limits on staff and board members' handling of the organization's money.

3.3.7 System for Award Management (SAM) with Federal Government

The Applicant must be registered in the System for Award Management at www.sam.gov and provide evidence of this registration as part of its application package to OCTO.

3.3.8 Indirect Costs Rate Documentation

No special documentation is required if the Applicant seeks a 10% indirect costs rate in its proposed budget. However, for another rate, include one of the following documents with the application:

- Unexpired federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA);
- OCTO negotiated agreement;
- A letter from a District government agency, dated within the last two years, stating the negotiated indirect cost rate; or,
- A letter from an independent CPA certifying the indirect cost rate was determined by the nonprofit organization's audited financial statements following OMB Uniform Guidance.

3.3.9 Certified Business Enterprise Certificate

For grants funded by the CPF, if the Applicant wants to qualify as a Certified Business Enterprise (CBE), the Applicant must submit a current District CBE certificate.

SECTION 4. REVIEW PANEL AND APPLICATION SCORING

4.1 Review Panel

This is a competitive grant. The review panel for the RFA will be composed of individuals with knowledge in the areas directly related to the RFA. The review panel will review, score, and rank each Applicant's application.

The panel will recommend the most responsive application for an award of the grant.

Review panels vary in size but typically are made up of three to five people. Review panel members can be from OCTO staff or outside of OCTO, as long as they do not have a conflict of interest.

4.2 Scoring Criteria

The reviewers score each application according to a list of criteria and the points available for each criterion. *See* Section 7. A scoring table/grid appears at the end of the Project Description. The points shown in the scoring table/grid for each criterion are the maximum that can be awarded for that criterion.

A reviewer awards points based on how much the project application satisfies each criterion. The reviewer will award points on a scale using the following descriptions:

- (a) Unacceptable - fails to meet minimum requirements, so will be awarded no points (no points awarded).
- (b) Poor - marginally meets minimum requirements but contains major deficiencies (10% of available points).
- (c) Minimal - marginally meets minimum requirements, but the deficiencies are minor and may be correctable (50% of available points).
- (d) Acceptable - meets the requirements (70% of available points).
- (e) Good - meets the requirements and exceeds some requirements (80% of available points).
- (f) Excellent - exceeds all or most requirements, so maximum points will be awarded (100% of available points).

This RFA requires a minimum \$5,000,000 match of funds or other resources dedicated to the project. If the application fails to address this, no points will be awarded for the criterion.

Sometimes an RFA will offer additional points. The Applicant should read the grant description carefully to determine if preference points are available. A separate line of the scoring table/grid will show this.

4.3 Partial Funding

OCTO reserves the right to issue an award that partially funds discrete activities, portions, or phases of the grant application.

SECTION 5. GRANTEE DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Grantee Documents

Upon acceptance of OCTO's award of the grant, the Grantee must provide the following documents.

5.1.1 Certificate of Insurance

The Grantee shall submit a certificate of insurance giving evidence of the required coverage. *See* Appendix 1, General Terms and Conditions Section 30. Insurance, and Appendix 3. Insurance Requirements. Ordinarily, OCTO will presume that the budget covers the cost of this required insurance and will not later adjust the grant award for this amount.

5.1.2 Assurance of Continued Truth and Accuracy

Upon receiving OCTO's Grant Award Notice, the Grantee must notify OCTO of any changes that may have occurred to its organization since the time of submission of its original application. This obligation continues through the grant period.

SECTION 6. REPORTING, PAYMENT, and OTHER PROVISIONS

6.1 Reporting Requirements

The Grantee must submit the following reports as a condition of continuing eligibility for funding.

6.1.1 Assurance of Continued Truth and Accuracy

OCTO will provide a quarterly status report template with the Grant Award Notice. These reports, which discuss grant activities for the preceding quarter, will be due in the wdcbroadband.submittable.com on each of the following dates.

Quarter 1 (January - March): April 15

Quarter 2 (April - June): July 15

Quarter 3 (July - September): October 15

Quarter 4 (October - December): January 15

If a report's due date falls on a weekend or District holiday, the report will be due the next business day. *See Appendix 2 – Reporting Schedule.*

At a minimum, the report must detail:

- Actions taken in the quarter preceding the report date;
- Highlight outputs achieved;
- Provide a financial update; and,
- Describe unforeseen changes to the project timetable, staffing, or partnerships, as well as any other changes that may affect project outcomes.

6.1.2 Final Report

OCTO will provide a final report template with the Grant Award Notice. This report includes quantification by the Grantee of the project's outputs and describes the extent to which project outcomes have met or will meet the objectives of the funded application. The template requires the submission of data and analysis of the data.

The final report must be uploaded into the wdcbroadband.submittable.com.

6.2 Reimbursement of Project Expenditures, Advances, and Disbursement of Funds

OCTO will not reimburse the Grantee for any work undertaken before OCTO awards the grant. OCTO will reimburse the Grantee only for expenditures incurred to perform work under the grant. Ordinarily, OCTO pays out grant funds as reimbursements. Advances are exceptions, not the rule. In limited cases, OCTO may advance funds at the beginning of the grant period for good cause approved by OCTO at its sole discretion. If the Applicant seeks an advance payment, it must request such payment in its application and explain why an advance payment is being requested. (*See Sections 1.8, 3.1; Appendix 1 Paragraph 11.g*).

OCTO operates on the District's fiscal year, which starts October 1 of a calendar year and ends September 30 of the next calendar year. Ordinarily, there is no requirement for weekly invoicing. The Grantee must submit each reimbursement request/invoice monthly using the [wdcbroadband.submittable.com] during the fiscal year for work performed within that same fiscal year. Each request/invoice must include supporting documentation.

Reimbursements will be mailed to the address on file for the Grantee. OCTO may make electronic payments in lieu of mailing checks. OCTO generally pays timely, approved, supported grant invoices within 60 days after OCTO receives them.

OCTO may withhold up to the final 10% of a grant until all required activities have been completed, including receipt of the final report. The Grantee should treat the prospect of such withholding as likely.

6.3 Corrective Action

In the event that the programmatic, financial, or documentation conditions of the grant are not being met in a thorough and timely fashion, progressive actions will be taken, at the discretion of OCTO, up to and including termination of funding. A project which is prematurely terminated will be subject to the same requirements regarding audit, recordkeeping, and submission of reports as a project which runs for the duration of the project period.

SECTION 7. PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR GRANT FUNDING

7.1 Summary: Project Name, Periods and Available Funds

Project Name

Construction of a DC Government-Owned Middle-Mile and Last Mile Fiber Asset

Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic demonstrated the need for higher quality, affordably priced broadband service, particularly in areas with less equitable access to the benefits of home and mobile broadband. Access to, and adoption of, reliable broadband is essential to full participation in the community and economy. A reliable broadband connection enables work, learning, healthcare, and more equitable access to government services. In DC, the need for broadband infrastructure investment is deepest in Wards 5, 7, and 8—those regions within DC which have the lowest broadband adoption rates and highest rates of poverty according to ACS data, and the NTIA’s publicly available Indicators of Broadband Need Map.

Through this CPF Program, OCTO proposes to address this need by coordinating resources from multiple federal funding programs, along with existing DC government resources, to effect a transformative, equitable, sustainable, and achievable improvement in DC’s broadband infrastructure in Ward 5 through the CPF Program. This RFA is limited to OCTO’s Ward 5 CPF project.

OCTO manages DC-Net, DC government’s all-fiber network. Since 2005, DC-Net has provided telecommunications services to the DC government, federal agencies, eligible CAIs, and directly to the public through operation of over 700 public Wi-Fi hot spots. Through Treasury’s CPF program, OCTO proposes to greatly increase DC-Net’s capacity to serve the public both directly through greater broadband service offerings at CAIs, and indirectly, through greater affordability, performance, and product variety in commercial home and mobile internet offerings in Ward 5.

Project Period

The project period begins on the date of the Director’s signature on OCTO’s Grant Award Notice to the Grantee and continues through December 31, 2026, a CPF-mandated deadline. OCTO cannot extend the performance period and does not anticipate the Department of Treasury extending the performance period for any reason.

Available Funding

\$15,000,000 (+ \$5,000,000 Grantee match) This amount can be adjusted depending upon the performance of the Grantee and/or the availability of funds.

7.2 Project Description

The Applicant may be one entity or multiple entities with one lead applicant. The application should demonstrate how the Applicant will build the DC-owned and Applicant-owned conduits and fiber described in Section 1.2 and achieve the project goals and outputs identified in Section 7.3.

7.3 Project Outcomes, Outputs, and Deliverable

Project Outcomes

- **New retail last mile** fiber to the premises, fixed location wireless, and mobile wireless offerings available in Ward 5, and subject to performance and affordability standards, including a requirement to offer a “Low Cost Plan” option to participating households at no out of pocket cost. ;
- **Greatly improved DC-Net last mile service** to one or more CAIs in Ward 5, free of existing contractually imposed prohibitions on providing service to residents, businesses, and national non-profits;
- **New DC-owned and operated middle mile fiber and conduit**, which will be used to drive affordability, reliability, product variety, and network resilience, and which will create an ongoing project income stream which can be used to further expand DC-Net fiber and conduit infrastructure throughout the city;
- **New privately owned and operated middle mile fiber and conduit**, subject to performance and affordability standards, including a requirement to offer a “Low Cost Plan” option to participating households at no out-of-pocket cost.

Project Outputs

- **Funding Match Requirement:** The Applicant must contribute at least \$5,000,000 to planning, digging, construction, and repaving along the route extending from Trinidad Recreation Center to the IXP;

- **Investment in New Conduit and Fiber:** The Applicant must install its own new conduit and fiber along the route, and offer retail service to residents within range of the route that meets or exceeds DC’s performance and affordability standards, including Low Cost Plan. The size and scope of this investment in Ward 5 would be a key factor in evaluating competitive bids;
- **Community Engagement:** The Applicant will be required to invest in community outreach projects to make the community aware of the Low Cost Plan prevailing bidder’s new service offerings, and to address the underlying barriers to broadband adoption within Ward 5;
- **Data Production:** The Applicant will be required to gather and maintain adoption rate data, broadband availability data, subscriber feedback, and pricing data, which must be provided to OCTO on a regular basis, to aid OCTO in supporting the FCC’s maintenance of its Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric, and in OCTO’s own long-term broadband and digital equity planning; and,
- **Fair Labor and Equitable Workforce Development:** The Applicant will be required to demonstrate long-term compliance with federal and local labor laws and will be required to disclose its plans for advancing diversity and inclusion, as well as equitable workforce development and job quality goals.

Deliverables

- New DC-owned and -operated middle mile fiber and conduit;
- New Grantee-owned and -operated middle mile fiber and conduit;
- Regional or national certifications/warranties for work completed;
- Data collection, including adoption rate data, broadband availability data, subscriber feedback, and pricing data;
- New last mile fiber to the premises;
- Community outreach program;
- Quarterly status reports; and,
- A final programmatic and financial report.

Application Scoring

Each Application will be scored according to the criteria below.

	Scoring Criteria	Points
1.	Applicant’s proposed dollar match and proposed in-kind contribution of conduit or fiber that would be owned by DC.	60

2.	Amount of proposed Applicant-owned, conduit and fiber subject to OCTO's performance and affordability standards in Ward 5.	25
3.	Contribution to digital equity or community outreach in Ward 5.	15

Applicant Dollar Match and Applicant's In-Kind Contribution of Conduit or Fiber that would be Owned by DC: 60%

Description: The amount of the Applicant's proposed match (which must be at least \$5,000,000) and in-kind contributions, with the specific points increasing as the total amount of the Applicant's combined contribution increases.

Scoring: The application with the highest combined proposed dollar match and dollar value of Applicant's proposed in-kind contribution, will receive full credit under this section. Lower dollar value applications will receive a percentage of points available using the scoring in Section 4.2.

Proposed Applicant-Owned, Conduit and Fiber Subject to OCTO's Performance and Affordability Standards in Ward 5: 25%

Description: Amount of proposed Applicant-owned conduit and fiber in Ward 5 subject to OCTO's performance and affordability standards described in Section 1.6.2.

Scoring: The proposal with the largest Applicant-owned in-kind contribution of conduit and fiber subject to OCTO's performance and affordability standards, will receive full credit under this section. Proposals with a lower amount of Applicant-owned in-kind contribution of conduit and fiber, will receive a percentage of points available using the scoring in Section 4.2.

Contribution to Digital Equity or Community Outreach in Ward: 15%

Description: Applicant's proposed contribution to digital equity or community outreach in Ward 5 (e.g., financial, partnerships with non-profit organizations or CAIs, community-focused programming, training, workforce development).

Scoring: OCTO will evaluate and score narrative responses under this category using the criteria described in Section 4.2.

SECTION 8. CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS

Instructions for Applicants: Do not upload the checklist. This checklist is for your benefit. If you use the checklist, you will want to answer all questions below. Carefully review the RFA for additional requirements. This checklist is not part of your application.		
1.	Does the applicant provide a brief summary of the project?	
2.	Is the application from one entity, the Applicant?	
3.	Is the named Applicant eligible for funding according to section 1.6 of the RFA?	
4.	If project eligibility conditions appear in Section 1.6 of the RFA, does the project fit these conditions?	
5.	Is the project application narrative included?	
6.	Does the application include a project description and all of the information required in the scoring rubric at the end of Section 7 of the RFA?	
7.	Is there a numeric budget?	
8.	Is there a budget narrative justifying each budget line item?	
9.	Do the line items in the application budget consider the allowable and nonallowable costs in Section 3.1 subsection b.2.iii of the RFA?	
10.	Did the applicant read the General Terms and Conditions document (Appendix 1)?	
11.	Does the application package include a Certificate of Good Standing that reflects a date within 6 months of the deadline date?	
12.	Does the application package include a valid Certificate of Clean Hands?	
13.	Does the application package include IRS W-9 Tax Form?	
14.	If the Applicant is a nonprofit organization, does the application package include a Tax Exemption Affirmation Letter?	
15.	Does the application package include the applicant's current fiscal year budget?	
16.	Does the application package include the applicant's most recent audited or unaudited financial statements?	
17.	Does the application package include a Separation of Duties Policy as described in Section 3.5 subsection (h) of the RFA?	

18.	If funded by Renewable Energy Development Fund (REDF) and the Applicant is seeking to qualify as a Certified Business Enterprise (CBE), is the current District CBE certificate included?	
19.	Is the Applicant registered in the System for Award Management (SAM)?	
20.	If the Applicant is eligible to claim indirect costs and is claiming more than 10% of direct costs, does the application package include supporting documentation for the indirect cost rate?	
21.	If applicable, does the application package include letters of support from other entities?	
22.	If requested, does the application include resumes of key personnel mentioned in the application?	
23.	If applicable, does the application identify District agencies from which funds were received, including the project title, amount paid, and what was accomplished?	
24.	Does the application include a work plan?	

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – General Terms and Conditions

Appendix 2 – Reporting Schedule

Appendix 3 – Insurance Requirements