

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

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

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program

Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects

The District of Columbia's Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) is pleased to announce the availability of grant funds for the deployment of last-mile broadband projects through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. This NOFA is issued pursuant to the requirements of the BEAD Program to competitively award subgrants for broadband deployment in unserved and underserved areas across the District.

Program Overview

The BEAD Program provides funding to deploy broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved locations, with a focus on ensuring access to high-speed internet for all residents and eligible community anchor institutions (CAIs).

Funding Availability

Funding will be awarded through a competitive process. Grant amounts will be based on the cost of the proposed project and the extent to which it meets the program's objectives. Projects will be prioritized based on factors such as minimal BEAD outlay, affordability, workforce development, speed to deployment, open access, support from local communities and past performance.

Total Available Funding:

- Deployment Subgrants: approximately \$8.9 million

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include internet service providers (ISPs), community-based organizations, non-profit entities, and other entities capable of deploying broadband infrastructure. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to provide high-speed broadband to all unserved and underserved locations within a defined project area.

Prioritization of Projects

1. **Unserved Locations:** Highest priority will be given to projects serving areas with no access to broadband service.
2. **Underserved Locations:** Once unserved areas are addressed, projects in areas with limited broadband access will be prioritized.

3. **Community Anchor Institutions:** Remaining funds will be allocated to projects serving eligible CAIs such as schools, libraries, and healthcare facilities.

Application Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Cost Efficiency:** Proposals that minimize the amount of BEAD funding requested relative to the cost of the project.
- **Affordability:** Commitment to offering affordable broadband services, especially to low-income households.
- **Workforce Development:** Plans to comply with federal labor standards and provide local job opportunities.
- **Speed to Deployment:** The ability to complete the project quickly and provide immediate benefits to the community.
- **Local Support:** Demonstrated support from local community institutions and stakeholders.

Compliance Requirements

Awardees must comply with all federal and local regulations, including the Build America, Buy America Act (BABA), and Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) requirements.

Important Dates

- **NOFA Publication Date:** January 31, 2025
- **Pre-Application Instructional Webinar -** February 6, 2025
- **Pre-Application Portal Opens for 30 days:** February 7, 2025
- **Draft Request for Applications (RFA) for Public Comment Posted for 14 days:** February 14, 2025
- **RFA Opens for 30 days:** March 1, 2025

Contact Information

For more information or to submit questions, please contact Kevin Hughes at octo.grants@dc.gov visit techtogetherdc.com.