STATE DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

Application Guidance

May 12, 2022

Version 4.0

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GRANT APPLICATION GUIDANCE OVERVIEW

Grant Application Guidance Overview

This document was created to support applicants in submitting an application or a letter of intent for the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program. Step-by-step instructions are provided to familiarize applicants with the NTIA Grants Portal, outline each component of the application, and provide direction on where to access forms and templates. The document is structured in the following four sections:

1.0 Program Guidance
This section highlights **application provisions**, **eligible entities**, key **submission dates**, and **final considerations** for a successful application.

2.0 NTIA Grants Portal Registration
This section outlines **how to access** and **register for the NTIA Grants Portal**, where applicants can submit their letter of intent or application for NTIA's State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program.

3.0 NTIA Grants Portal Workspace
This section outlines **how to navigate the NTIA Grants Portal**. Applicants will be shown an **Application Workspace**, which highlights all the sections of the overall application request needed to successfully apply.

4.0 DE Planning Application Submission
Applicants will find detailed, step-by-step instructions on how to **properly fill out their application for the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program** along with instructions on **how to submit each item through the NTIA Grants Portal.**

There are multiple forms required to complete the application for states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Application materials include the following.

Standard/Fillable Forms

- ❑ **SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance)** ▷
- ❑ **SF 424A (Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs)** ▷
- ❑ **CD-511 (Certification of Lobbying Activities)** Ω
- ❑ **SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities)** – *as applicable* Ω

DE Planning-Specific Items

- ❑ **Project Summary** ▷
- ❑ **Detailed Budget** ☐ Ω
- ❑ **Budget Narrative** ☐ Ω
- ❑ **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement** – *as applicable*
- ❑ **SAM.gov Registration**

▷ *Item input directly into the NTIA Grants Portal*

Ω *Fillable Form input into the NTIA Grants Portal*

☐ *File template input into the NTIA Grants Portal*

Note: U.S. territories other than Puerto Rico and Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations will submit a letter of intent. NTIA will then provide application submission requirements and timelines for these entities.

PROGRAM GUIDANCE

1.0 Program Guidance

1.1 Before You Get Started

Before preparing and submitting an application, applicants are encouraged to read the State Digital Equity (DE) Planning Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), this Application Guidance, and the DE Program page on www.InternetForAll.gov. By carefully reviewing these materials, applicants will help ensure that their application is complete and satisfies the requirements of the program. Please note that all applicants are required to be current and registered in www.SAM.gov and have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number.

> ### Registering with System Award Management
>
> To register or check your SAM.gov registration, go to www.SAM.gov and complete the online SAM registration process to obtain a UEI (SAM) or verify if your organization already has one. Note that a new SAM.gov registration or renewal of an expired SAM.gov registration can take 7-10 business days to process after being submitted on SAM.gov.

1.2 Standard Terms and Conditions for Department of Commerce Grants

All DE awardees are required to comply with all applicable provisions set forth in the following:

- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements: Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this Program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

- Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions: The Department of Commerce will apply to each award in this Program, the Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions in effect on the date of award. The current version, dated November 12, 2020, is accessible at Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.

> ### Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number
>
> The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program is 11.032. The CFDA Title is State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program.

- Pre-Award Notification Requirements: The Department of Commerce will apply the Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements dated December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), accessible at http://go.usa.gov/hKkR.

1.3 DE Planning Grant Program Eligible Entities

To be eligible for funding under DE, applicants must be one of the following types of entities. Note that any eligible entity that intends to apply is referred to as an "applicant" in this document.

- State of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico (Defined as "States" for the purposes of this program).

- Territories or possessions of the United States that are not defined as States for purposes of this program, as well as Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations.

1.4 Key Submission Dates and Methods for Submission

1.4.1 For States

Complete applications must be received through the NTIA Grants Portal no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern

Daylight Time (EDT) on **July 12, 2022**. States must also certify that, not later than one (1) year after the date on which the Assistant Secretary awards the planning grant to the State, the Administering Entity for that State shall develop a State Digital Equity Plan.

States' applications must be submitted electronically through the NTIA Grants Portal, which can be accessed at grants.ntia.gov. The application package for electronic submission, including templates, is available on the Project Profile pages in the Portal. And on the DE program page on www.InternetForAll.gov. Complete applications or portions of applications submitted by postal mail, courier, email, facsimile, or other means will not be accepted.

The NTIA Grants Portal will be available at www.InternetForAll.gov, beginning May 13, 2022.

Allowable Methods for Submission
States:
▪ Electronically, via the NTIA Grants Portal
Territories & Tribes:
▪ Electronically, via the NTIA Grants Portal
▪ Email, via digitalequity@ntia.gov
▪ Mail or courier, to 1401 Constitution Ave., NW Washington, DC 20230

Upon completion of the application, the portal will provide a date and time stamped confirmation number that will serve as proof of submission. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications early to avoid last-minute congestion on the intake system. However, early submissions will not confer any advantage or priority in review.

1.4.2 For Territories and Tribal Entities

Letters of intent must be received through the NTIA Grants Portal no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on **July 12, 2022**, or if submitted by mail or courier, postmarked (for postal mail) or show clear evidence of mailing (for courier submissions) no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on July 12, 2022.

Application submission timelines for U.S. territories and possessions other than Puerto Rico and from Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations will be provided in a subsequent notice based on the results of the letters of intent received.

For U.S. territories other than Puerto Rico and for Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations, complete application packets may be submitted electronically through the NTIA Grants Portal, by email, or by mail or courier.

1.4.3 Application Templates

Applicants are required to upload a number of documents using templates, which will allow NTIA to perform automated processing and analysis. To ensure an expeditious review of applications, these documents must:

- be uploaded in the same file type as the provided template or as indicated in the template,
- use the same formatting provided in the template, and
- not be password-protected.

Failure to provide files consistent with the templates will result in NTIA being unable to automatically process the application and may result in delays or a rejection of the application.

The following forms are available to download at www.grants.gov:

- CD-511
- SF-LLL

The following templates are available to download on the [NTIA Grants Portal](#):

- Budget Narrative

- Detailed Budget Justification

The following documents are built directly into the NTIA Grants Portal:

- SF-424

- SF-424A

- Project Summary and Eligibility

The following template is included in this Application Guidance:

- Letter of Intent

  Note: The use of this template is not required. The Letter of Intent must be uploaded as a PDF.

1.5 Final Considerations

- Before applying, Applicants should fully read the NOFO and other Technical Assistance materials available on the DE Planning Grant Program page on [www.InternetForAll.gov](#) as well as applicable OMB circulars governing administrative requirements, cost principles, and audits.

- Applicants may receive funding only for costs established in the NOFO as allowable uses of funds.

- By submitting an application, the Applicant certifies that the information and responses in the application are material representations of fact and are true and correct.

- Once the application has been submitted, it is presumed that the application is final, and the Applicant will no longer be able to make changes to the application in the portal. If an applicant needs to make changes to an application, the applicant must contact NTIA for assistance in making updates.

NTIA GRANTS PORTAL REGISTRATION

2.0 NTIA Grants Portal Registration

Use of the NTIA Grants Portal is required for all states. For U.S. territories other than Puerto Rico and Indian tribes, Alaska native entities, and native Hawaiian organizations, use of the NTIA Grants Portal is recommended, but not required for those submitting letters of intent via email, mail, or courier.

2.1 How to Access the NTIA Grants Portal

The NTIA Grants Portal can be accessed at https://grants.ntia.gov/grantsPortal/s/. States must complete and submit applications through the Portal. Territories and tribes choosing not to submit their letter of intent via email, mail, or courier must do so through the Portal.

Use one of the following browsers to access the Portal. Refer to the Supported Browsers to Access the Portal page for more information.

- Chrome Latest Release (Recommended)
- Microsoft Edge Chromium (Recommended)
- Mozilla Firefox Latest Release
- Safari

2.2 NTIA Grant Programs Page
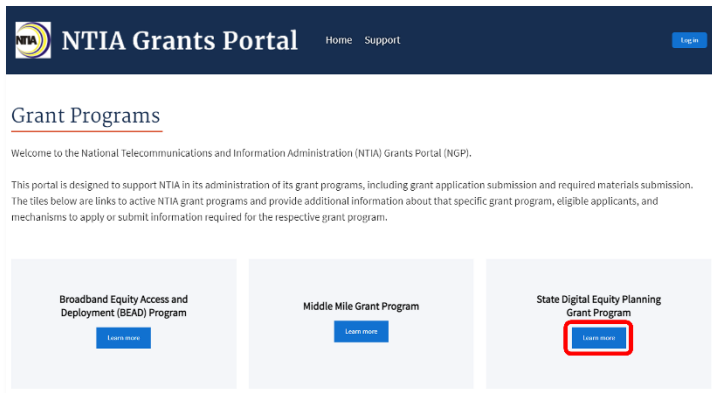
The public

Click the **Learn More** button under the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program to get to the program home page.
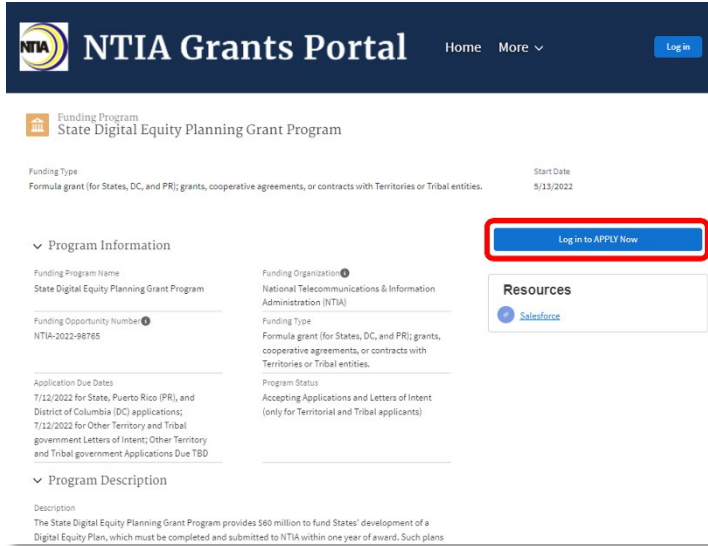
When you click the **Learn More** button on the landing page, you will be taken to the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program home page (as illustrated to the left).

If you have not logged in, the button will show **Log in to APPLY Now,** which will redirect you to the login page. From here, return to the program home page and click **Apply Now**.
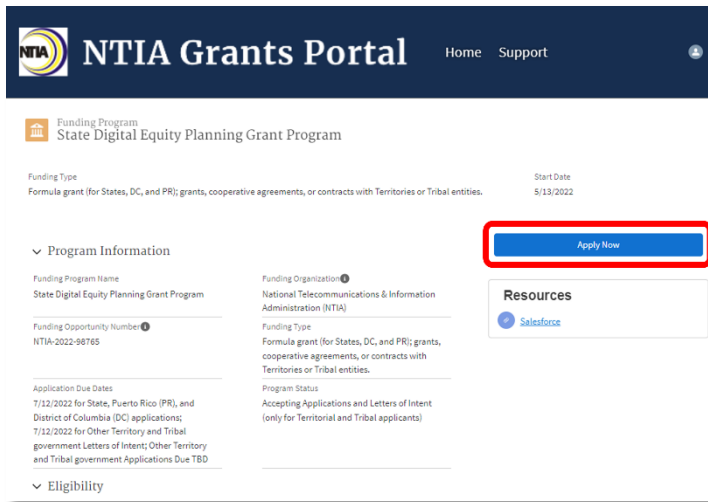
If you are logged in, you can start your application for the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program by clicking the **Apply Now** button.

2.3 Log-in and Registration

Click the **Log in** button in the upper right corner to sign in as a registered Portal user or to register the first time you access the Portal.
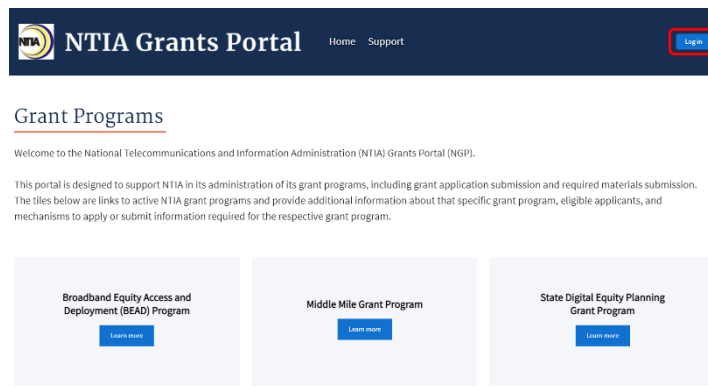
2.3.1 Log in

If you are new to the Portal and need to register for the first time, click **Register** below the blue Log in button.

If you have a Username and Password, enter the username and password and click the blue **Log in** button to move forward.

Important: Upon completing registration, your Username will be the email address used to register for the NTIA Grants Portal appended with **.ntia** as the suffix. For example, the Username for the email address JohnSmith@organization.com would be JohnSmith@organization.com.ntia. If you forgot your password, click **Forgot your password?** below the blue Log in button on the login screen.

2.3.2 Reset Password

Enter your Username, which is the email address used to register for the NTIA Grants Portal appended with **.ntia** as the suffix. As an example, for JohnSmith@organization.com email address, the Username would be JohnSmith@organization.com.ntia. Then click the **Reset Password** button or click Cancel to cancel and return to the login screen.

For assistance, email the NTIA Grants Portal Help Desk at ngphelpdesk@ntia.gov.

1. As part of the Portal registration process, approval is required before completing registration. Follow the steps below to register. NTIA will send an approval email with a link to complete the process**.** Register to access the NTIA Grants Portal by entering contact information in the fields provided. A red asterisk (*) indicates a required field. Then click the blue **Sign Up** button.

   Note: Sam.gov UEI registration information will be required at a later step in the application process.

   If you have registered previously, click **Already have an account?** to log in.

2. Click the **Entity Type** field to select the entity type. For State/Territory Government entity types, start typing the name of your State or Territory in the State/Territory Organization Name field to select the from the list of States and Territories. Click the blue **Sign Up** button to complete the registration process.

3. Check your email inbox for an approval email, confirming your registration and providing steps to complete the registration and login process.
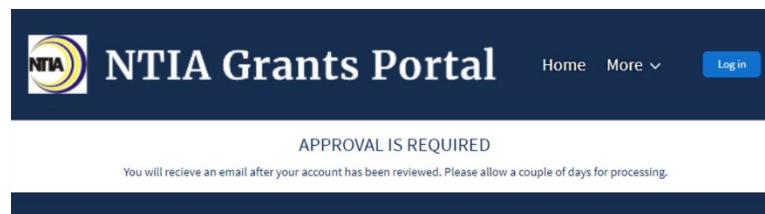
   In the event of receiving an email indicating you are not approved, contact NTIA for assistance.

NGP Help Desk   9:23 AM (4 hours ago)   ☆   ↩   ⋮

to me ▾

Tommy,

We have received your NTIA Grants Portal request to create an account for one of NTIA's State or Territory formula grant programs. We are unable to approve your registration as your email domain does not appear to represent the domain of an eligible applicant (State, Territory, or District of Columbia). If you believe this is an error, please email NTIA at NGPhelpdesk@ntia.gov

Thank you,
NTIA

2.3.4 Registration Welcome Email with Initial Login Link

4. Open your Welcome Email and click on the login link.

   Important: Your Username is the email address used to register, appended with **.ntia**. Note this will be the Username used when logging in to the Portal in the future.

Welcome to grantsPortal   Inbox ×

Mon, Apr 18, 1:52 PM (22 hours ago)   ☆   ↩   ⋮

Hi Ben,

Welcome to the NTIA Grants Portal. We have received your request to be added as a user/applicant to the NTIA Grants Portal. Please click on the link below to create your password for authentication in the NTIA Grants Portal. Your username will be your email address with ".ntia" appended at the end.

To get started, go to https://tsk2acnfig-ntiagrants.cs133.force.com/grantsPortal/login?c=dpYNm97o_Fiavw.PkvWFrl2 hkQV8aUOFAVkn1G1uAQZElfz8m5mZr.4cv1nIEWTX35Yzd2vhdPWJSo_adt5HazKJP5Rc1qK473.BTmGoWACXnH4m0 ERh05MOtdry4U.St7cUD2cv0tme3zd8JotTRpQ2nTv0nYvW.HZwWSc3w4Znf.yq0CSKmr9D9YDzRIuZAOqxQzho

Username: FirstLast@yourorg.gov.ntia

If you have any issues with the link or questions about access, please contact <email@ntia.gov>.

Thank you,

NTIA

5. You will be asked to **Change Your Password**. Enter a password according to the requirements indicated, and then click the **Change Password** button.
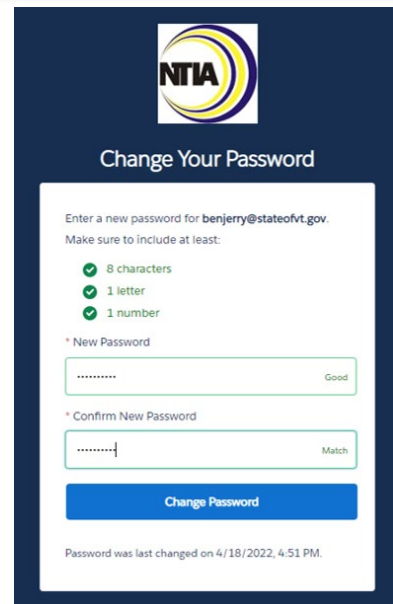
2.4 Setting Up Multi-Factor Authentication

After setting up your password, you will be asked to set up a verification method using Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA). Once MFA is set up, you will use it to verify your identity each time you log in. You will be guided in the subsequent steps to download and install an authentication app of your choice onto your mobile device from the app store.

1. Click the **radio button** for the app you wish to use – either the Salesforce Authenticator mobile app or another authenticator app – then click the **Continue** button.

   For more information about using the Salesforce Authenticator mobile app for multi-factor authentication, view this video: How to Use Salesforce Authenticator for MFA Logins.
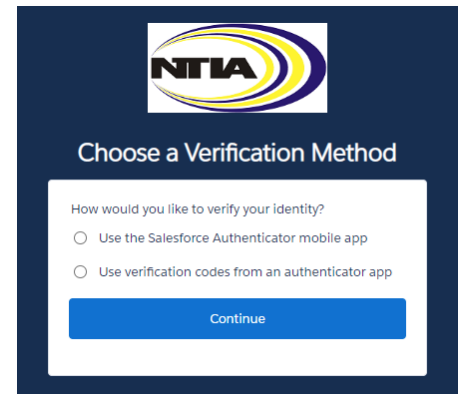
What is Multi-Factor Authentication?

Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is a digital authentication method used to confirm the identity of a user to allow them access to a website or app through at least two pieces of evidence. With an authenticator app downloaded onto your mobile device, users are given an automatically generated code that refreshes around every 30 seconds. Using an authenticator app on your mobile device bolsters your online security.

2a. If you selected to use the Salesforce Authenticator mobile app verification method, follow the instructions on the **Connect Salesforce Authenticator** screen, or use the following instructions.

2.4.1 Downloading and Installing the Salesforce Authenticator

1. Search for Salesforce Authenticator in your phone's app store.

   - iPhone/iOS users will search in the Apple App Store
   - Android users will search in the Google Play Store

2. Follow your screen's prompts to install the app on your phone.

3. Open the Salesforce Authenticator app and follow the verification setup activities when you are prompted (mobile number verification, four-digit passcode setup).

2.4.2 Connecting the Salesforce Authenticator to Your NTIA Grants Portal Login

1. In the Salesforce Authenticator app on your mobile device, tap **Add an Account.**

2. A unique two-word phrase will appear in the app, enter the phrase into the **Connect Salesforce Authenticator** screen (illustrated below) and click **Connect.**

3. Confirm the connection in the Salesforce Authenticator app and you will have successfully paired your account.

Note: You will only need to connect your account once. You will continue to use the Salesforce Authenticator to approve future logins.
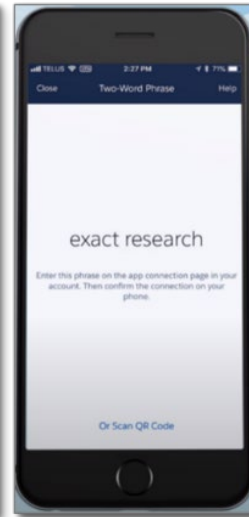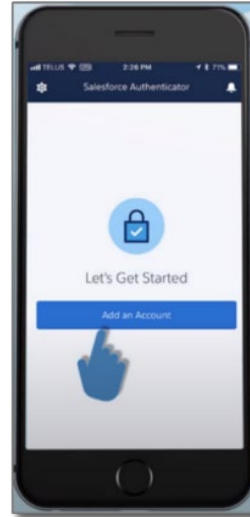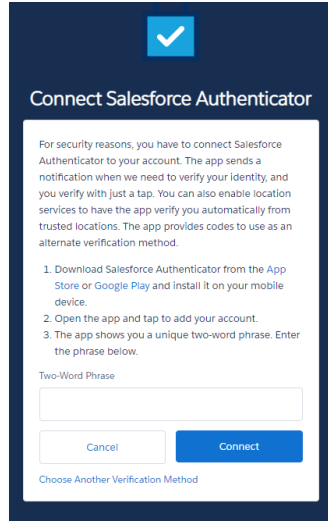
2b. If you selected to use another authenticator app (other than the Salesforce Authenticator App), follow the instructions on the **Connect an Authenticator App** screen. List of commonly used Authenticator Apps available to download from the app store onto your mobile device:

- Google Authenticator
- Lastpass
- Microsoft Authenticator
- Authy by Twilio
- 2FA Authenticator
- Duo Mobile
- Aegis Authenticator

Note: You will only need to connect (pair) your account once with an authenticator app. You will continue to use the authenticator app to approve future logins.
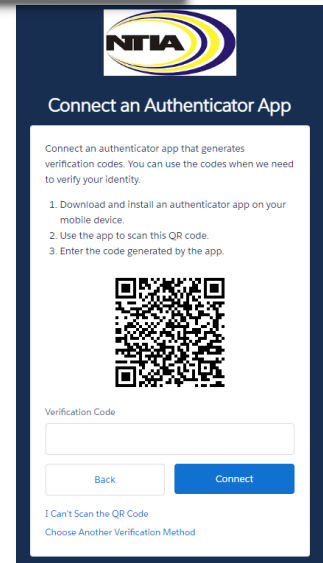
2.5 Log into the NTIA Grants Portal Using the Connected Authenticator App

Once you have installed and connected the authenticator app on your mobile device, you will continue to use the app to verify your identity each time you log into the Portal.

1. Enter the Username you received during the registration process, which is your email address appended with **.ntia**, and the Password you created, in the fields provided into the NTIA Grants Portal from your computer web browser. The Portal will send a notification to your mobile device.

2. The authenticator app will provide details of the login request, including Username, Service, Device, and Location.

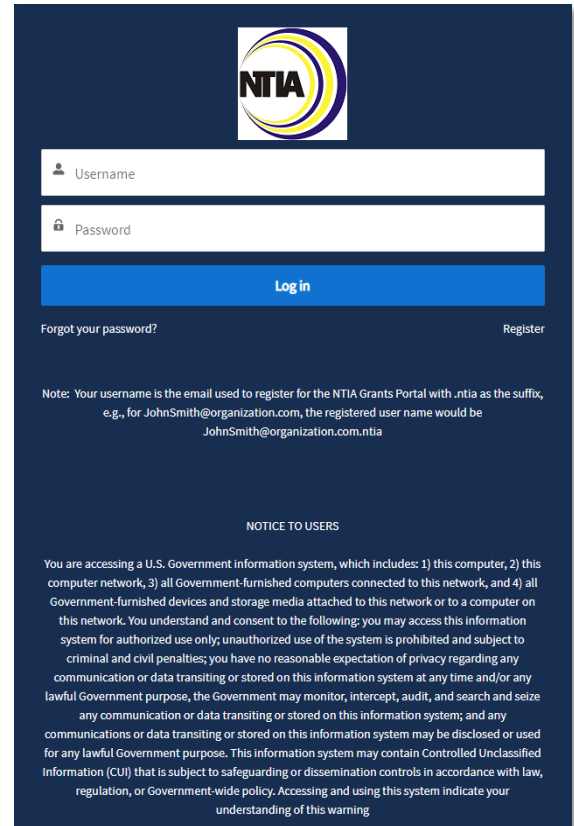3. Review the login details, then tap **Approve**; if you do not recognize the request, tap **Deny.**

Note: To make logging in easier, enable **Always approve from this location** from the Salesforce Authenticator to automatically approve requests matching location and login information.

Note: Your username is the email used to register for the NTIA Grants Portal with .ntia as the suffix, e.g., for JohnSmith@organization.com, the registered user name would be JohnSmith@organization.com.ntia

NOTICE TO USERS

You are accessing a U.S. Government information system, which includes: 1) this computer, 2) this computer network, 3) all Government-furnished computers connected to this network, and 4) all Government-furnished devices and storage media attached to this network or to a computer on this network. You understand and consent to the following: you may access this information system for authorized use only; unauthorized use of the system is prohibited and subject to criminal and civil penalties; you have no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding any communication or data transiting or stored on this information system at any time and/or any lawful Government purpose, the Government may monitor, intercept, audit, and search and seize any communication or data transiting or stored on this information system; and any communications or data transiting or stored on this information system may be disclosed or used for any lawful Government purpose. This information system may contain Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) that is subject to safeguarding or dissemination controls in accordance with law, regulation, or Government-wide policy. Accessing and using this system indicate your understanding of this warning

NTIA GRANTS PORTAL WORKSPACE

3.0 NTIA Grants Portal Workspace

3.1 Welcome to the NTIA Grants Portal

The **Home** button at the top of the screen returns you to your NTIA Grants Portal home page. The **Support** button takes you to a screen with NTIA Support contact information.

Because a grant request has not yet been started, the **My Grant Request(s)** section will be empty. To start a grant request, follow these steps:

1. From the **Available Programs** section, click on the link: **State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program.**
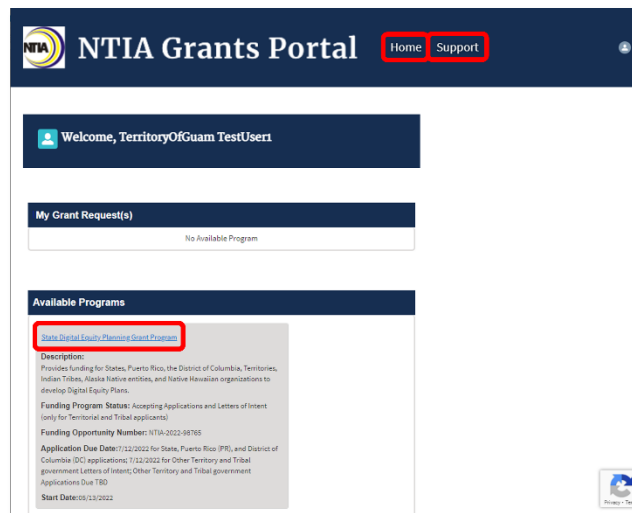
2. Click the **Apply Now** button. If needed, access the **Resources** links.
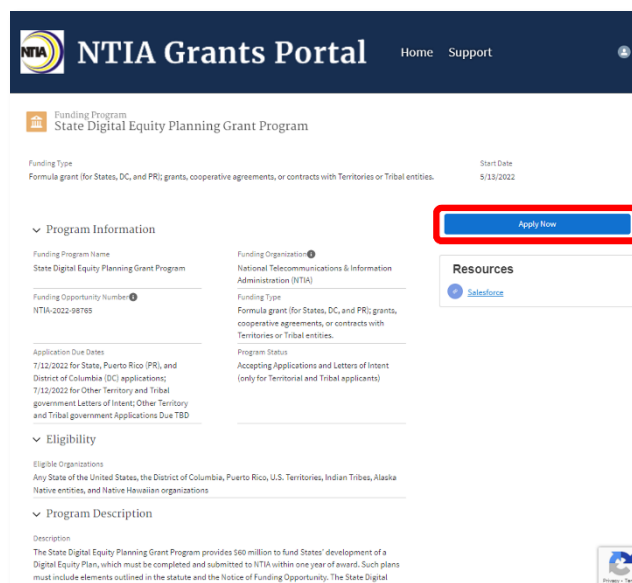
3.2 Application Workspace Tab

The **Application Workspace** tab contains the sections of the overall application request process listed in the order in which to complete the application:

1. Letter of Intent
2. Project Narrative and Eligibility
3. Form 424
4. Budget Form 424A
5. Detailed Budget Justification and Budget Narrative
6. Additional Required Documents
7. Attestation and Generate Forms, and Submit

Each section reflects a **Section Status**, such as Not Started, In Progress, and Completed.

Depending on the type of applicant, the following sections are required to initiate the application process.
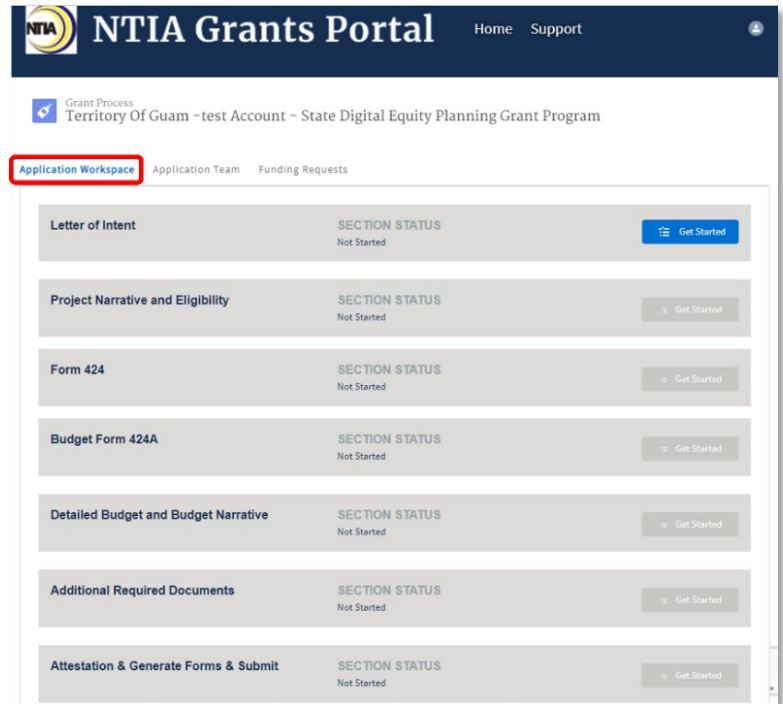
Section	Tribal Entity*	Territory*	States, DC, Puerto Rico
Letter of Intent	✓	✓	✗
Project Narrative and Eligibility	✗	✗	✓
Form 424	✗	✗	✓
Budget Form 424A	✗	✗	✓
Detailed Budget Justification and Budget Narrative	✗	✗	✓
Additional Required Documents	✗	✗	✓
Attestation and Generate Forms, and Submit	✗	✗	✓

*Applicants that are Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, Native Hawaiian organizations, or U.S. territories other than Puerto Rico will be required to submit standard forms and sections above. Additional information and instruction on completing the application will be provided after submission of the LOI.

Add team members early on who will participate in the application process. Each team member will require their own login credentials to input application information. To ensure coordination on application inputs, work with all team members on planned application activities so as not to overwrite application information.

When adding a team member who needs access to the current application, be aware of the following: Only one Applicant role and only one Authorized Organizational Representative role can be assigned to an application. Changing the Applicant and adding or changing the Authorized Organizational Representative can only be done in the Form 424 section in the NTIA Grants Portal.

1. Click the **Application Team** tab, then click the **+ Add Contact** button. Indicate if the contact is outside of your organization by selecting **Yes** or **No** from the drop- down menu.

2. Enter the new team member contact information in the Add Contact fields. A red asterisk (*) indicates a required field. Click the **Save** button, or the **Save & New** button to add additional team members. Click the **Close** button to close the Add Contact section.
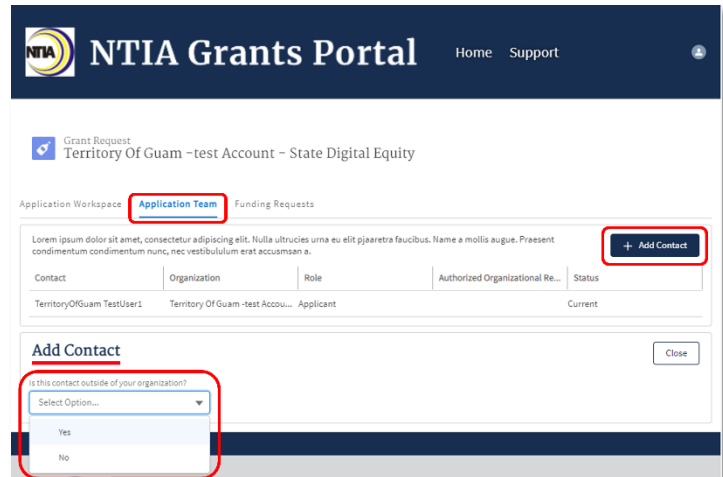
   The new team member will receive a Welcome Email with a link to log into the portal.

Note: The link in the Welcome Email will expire after 7 days. If a new login link is needed, the applicant team member can go to **Forgot your password?** on the login page and enter their Username to receive a new login link via email, or they can contact NTIA to request a new email with a login link.

To update the role of an application team member, click the **drop-down** menu under Role and select the new role, then click the **Save** button.
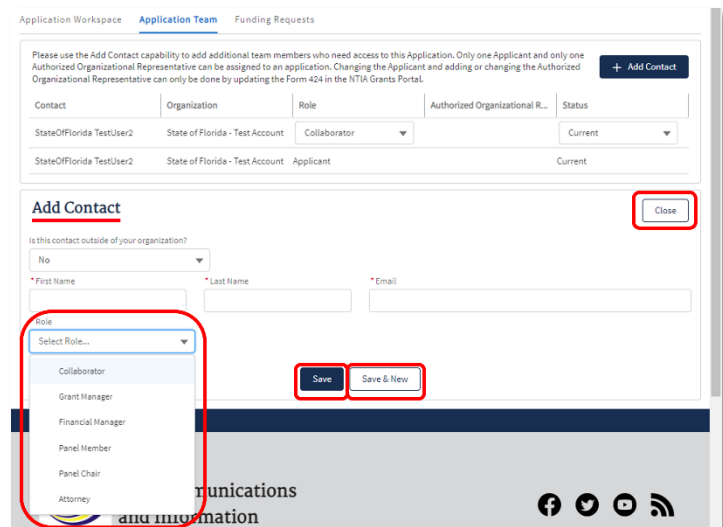
To remove a team member, click the **drop-down** menu under Status to select either Current or Former status, and then click the **Save** button.
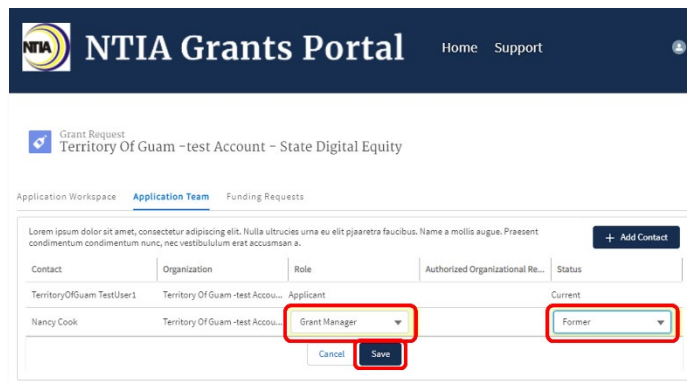
Note: You will be able to see who is assigned as Applicant and as Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR), but you cannot manage those users within the Application Team Tab. To add or change the Applicant or AOR, create a new Standard Form 424.

3.4 Funding Requests Tab

To view the overall status of the application, click the **Funding Requests** tab.
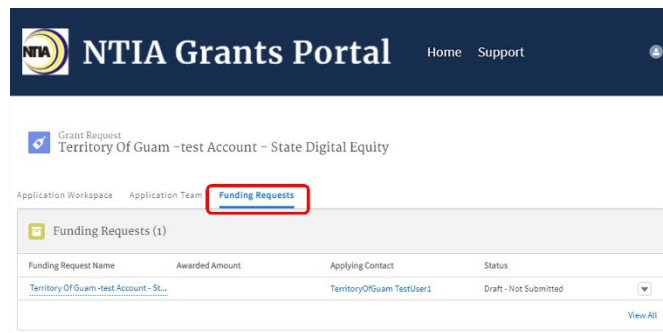
3.4.1 Reviewing Documents That Have Been Uploaded

There are multiple steps throughout the application process that require you to upload documents. To view, download or confirm the files that were uploaded you will use the 'Funding Requests' tab at the top.

1. Click the **Funding Requests** tab
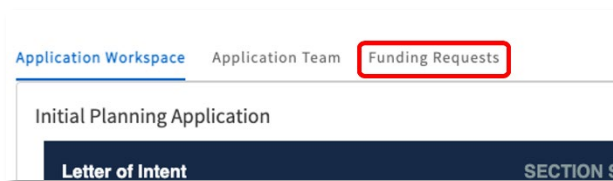
2. Click on the relevant item under the Funding Request Name column.
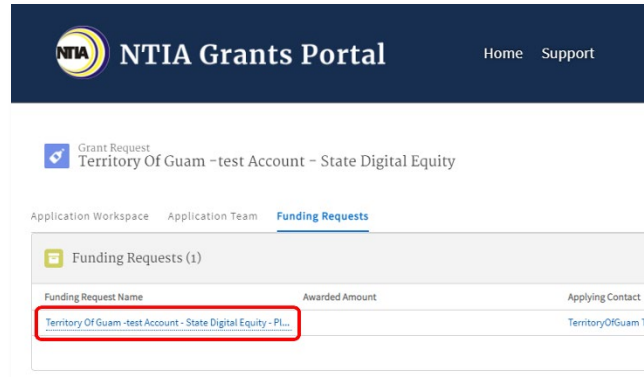
3. Click on the **RELATED** tab.
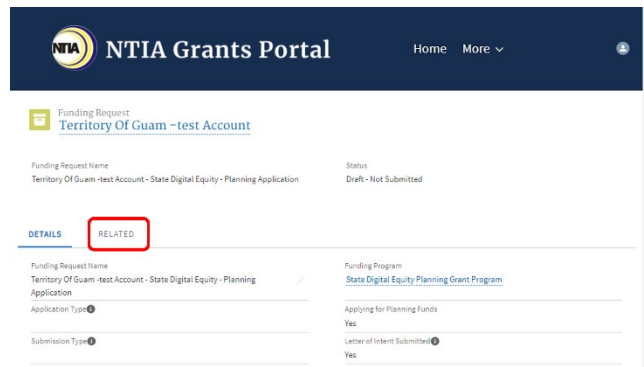
4. Under the RELATED tab you will be able to review the list of documents that will have been uploaded to the application Click on the document you wish to review.
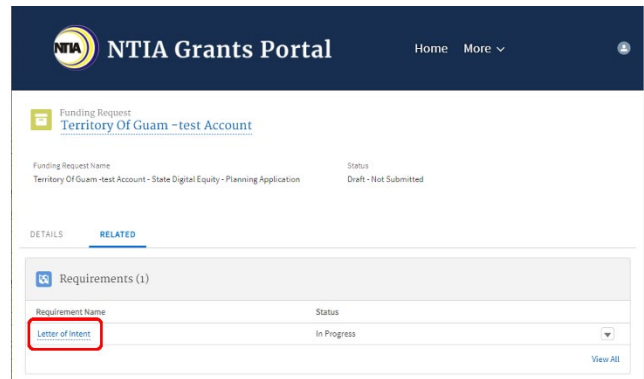
5. For each document, you will be able to see any versions that have been uploaded and will be able to open and review them or download them. Only add documents through the Application Workspace to ensure your application is correct
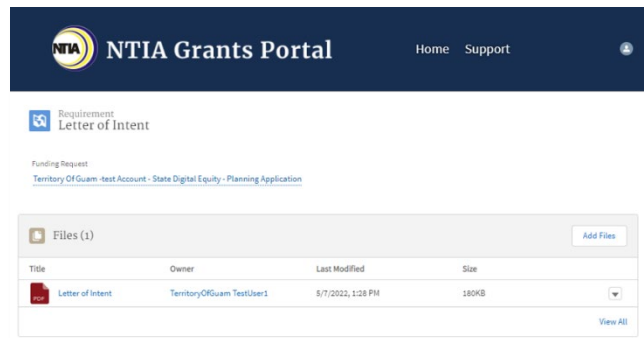
3.5 Saving Your Work and Logging Out

Important: Save your work within any section by clicking the **Save** or **Next** button. The Section Status will display as 'In Progress.' Click the **Continue** button to return to your saved work. **If you enter information on a screen and do not click Save or Next, your work will not be saved and you will need to re-enter it.**

To log out, click the **profile icon** in the upper right, then click **Logout**.
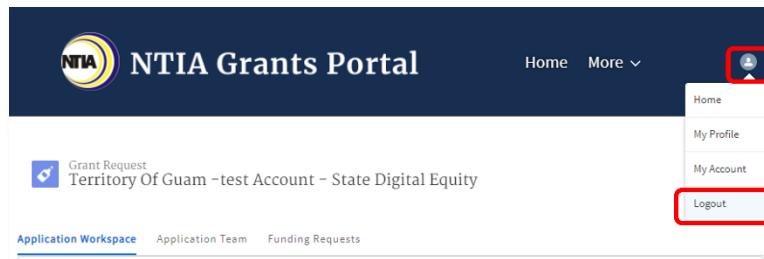
DIGITAL EQUITY PLANNING APPLICATION STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

4.0 Digital Equity Planning Application – Step by Step

4.1 Letter of Intent (LOI) – Tribes & Territories Only

Letters of intent from U.S. territories and possessions other than Puerto Rico and from Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations must be received through the NTIA Grants Portal no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on **July 12, 2022**, or if submitted by mail or courier, postmarked (for postal mail) or show clear evidence of mailing (for courier submissions) no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on **July 12, 2022**.

Application submission timelines will be provided in a subsequent notice based on the results of the letters of intent received.

For U.S. territories and possessions other than Puerto Rico, the letter should describe the entity that would administer digital equity activities under this program, as well as specific activities the territory or possession intends to pursue in support of digital equity plan development.

For Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, or Native Hawaiian organizations, the letter should describe the entity that would administer digital equity activities under this program, as well as specific activities the Tribal organization intends to pursue in support of digital equity plan development (including development of the entity's own plan and, optionally, development of relevant State plans).

Two templates of a letter of intent can be found on the following pages. The first is for U.S. territories and possessions (other than Puerto Rico); the second is for Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations. If a template is used, it should be saved and uploaded in PDF format.

[On Governor's Office Letterhead]

May 16, 2022

The Honorable Alan Davidson

Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information

NTIA Administrator

US Department of Commerce

1401 Constitution Ave., NW

Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Davidson:

On behalf of [INSERT APPLICANT NAME], I am declaring our intent to participate in the State Digital Equity Planning Program.

The [INSERT DEPARTMENT, AGENCY, OR OFFICE] will serve as the as the recipient of, and administering agent for, any Digital Equity Planning Program award. The following individual will serve as the point of contact for all correspondence:

[INSERT NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS]

In support of Digital Equity Plan development, we have identified the following activities:

[INSERT A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES THAT THE TERRITORY WILL TAKE TO DEVELOP THEIR DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN.]

Sincerely,

[Signed by the Governor or equivalent official]

[On Tribal/Native Governing Body Letterhead]

May 16, 2022

The Honorable Alan Davidson

Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information

NTIA Administrator

US Department of Commerce

1401 Constitution Ave., NW

Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Davidson:

On behalf of [INSERT APPLICANT NAME], I am declaring our intent to participate in the State Digital Equity (DE) Program.

The [INSERT ENTITY, ORGANIZATION, DEPARTMENT, AND/OR OFFICE] will serve as the as the recipient of, and administering agent for, any Digital Equity Program award. The following individual will serve as the point of contact for all correspondence:

[INSERT NAME AND EMAIL]

In support of Digital Equity Plan development, we have identified the following activities:

[INSERT A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES THAT THE TRIBAL/NATIVE ENTITY WILL TAKE TO DEVELOP THEIR DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN. TRIBAL/NATIVE ENTITIES CAN DESCRIBE HOW THEY WILL DEVELOP THEIR OWN DIGITAL EQUITY PLAN, AND OPTIONALLY, THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELEVANT STATE PLANS)

Sincerely,

[Signed by the governing body]

1. From the Application Workspace, locate the **Letter of Intent** section and click the **Get Started** button.

2. Review the Instructions for the Letter of Intent. Notice the **Steps** highlighted in the sidebar to the right. Click the **Next** button to proceed. Click the **X** in the upper right corner of the modal to return to the Application Workspace.

3. Click the **Upload Files** button to select the file(s) to upload, or drag and drop the file(s) into the upload files space.

4. Click the **Done** button on the pop-up window.

5. Verify the uploaded file(s) in the Upload Letter of Intent window; click the **delete icon** to remove the file(s). After uploading the Letter of Intent file(s), click the **Save and Next** button.
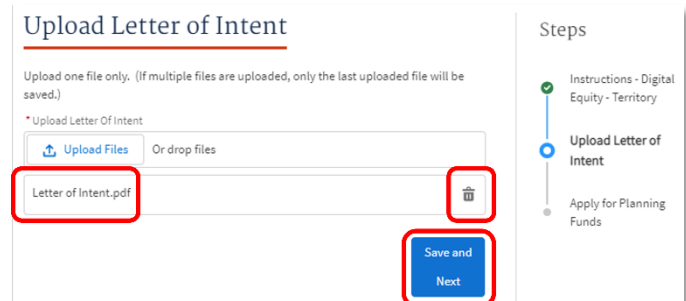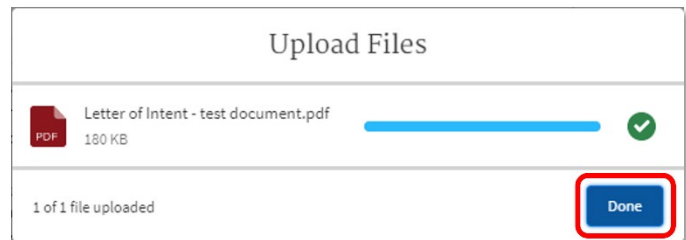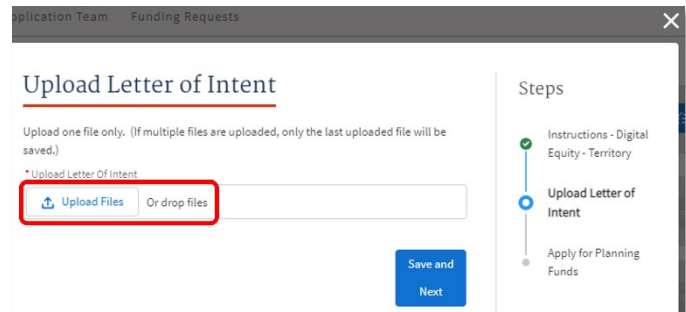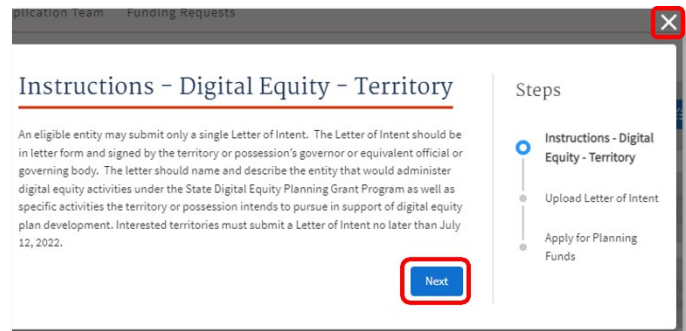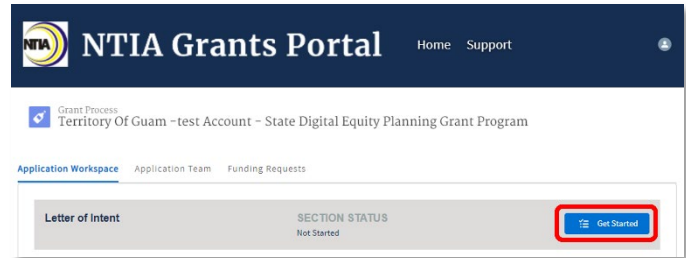
6. Select **Yes**. The red asterisk (*) indicates a required response.

   Click the **Next** button to return to the Application Workspace.

7. Upon completing the final step of the Letter of Intent section, a green banner with a confirmation message will appear at the top of the screen, and a confirmation email will be sent to the applicant. Click the **X** icon in the upper right corner to close the green banner confirmation message.

   To update the Status of Applying for Planning Money, or to delete and upload a new Letter of Intent, click the **Review/Update** button in the Letter of Intent section.

8. Click the **radio** button next to the action you wish to take, then click the **Next** button. Click the **X** in the upper right corner of the modal to return to the Application Workspace.

4.2 Project Narrative and Eligibility Section – States, DC, and Puerto Rico

Applicants should provide a clear and compelling description of the project.

For States, the project should align with the statutory purposes described in the NOFO and listed below.

Applicants should be clear about the project's benefits—discussing, for example, how the project will advance the objectives of the DE program as well as specific objectives outlined in the NOFO, an overview of the proposed route or service area(s), including information regarding rurality and socio-economic indicators in the area to be served by the proposed project; and a description of need in the proposed service area(s), including communities considered unserved and/or underserved in the proposed service area(s). The summary should avoid highly technical terminology or jargon unless it is integral to the understanding of the proposal. NTIA suggests that the summary be written last, after the Applicant has completed all other sections of the application. Applicants with involvement from multiple organizations and key partners (subrecipients) should describe those relationships broadly here.

For this summary, the applicant may provide high-level financial figures and budgetary information. It is important that the numbers presented in this section are consistent throughout the entire application. The summary should not introduce new information not included elsewhere in the application. The applicant should note that NTIA will make the Project Summary publicly available and therefore the applicant

should avoid including any confidential or proprietary information in this description.

4.2.1 Statutory Requirements of State Digital Equity Plans

1. Identification of barriers to digital equity faced by Covered Populations in the State

2. Measurable objectives for documenting and promoting, among each Covered Population located in that State—

   a. The availability of, and affordability of access to, fixed and wireless broadband technology;

   b. The online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services;

   c. Digital literacy;

   d. Awareness of, and the use of, measures to secure the online privacy of, and cybersecurity with respect to, an individual; and

   e. The availability and affordability of consumer devices and technical support for those devices;

3. An assessment of how the measurable objectives will impact and interact with the State's—

   a. Economic and workforce development goals, plans, and outcomes;

   b. Educational outcomes;

   c. Health outcomes;

   d. Civic and social engagement; and

   e. Delivery of other essential services;

4. A description of how the State plans to collaborate with key stakeholders in the State, which may include—

   a. Community anchor institutions;

   b. County and municipal governments;

   c. Local educational agencies;

   d. Where applicable, Indian Tribes, Alaska Native entities, or Native Hawaiian organizations;

   e. Nonprofit organizations;

   f. Organizations that represent—

      i. Individuals with disabilities, including organizations that represent children with disabilities;

      ii. Aging Individuals;

      iii. Individuals with language barriers, including—

         1. Individuals who are English learners; and

         2. Individuals who have low levels of literacy;

      iv. Veterans; and

      v. Individuals in that State who are incarcerated in facilities other than Federal

correctional facilities;

    g. Civil rights organizations;

    h. Entities that carry out workforce development programs;

    i. Agencies of the State that are responsible for administering or supervising adult education and literacy activities in the State;

    j. Public housing authorities in the State; and

    k. A partnership between any of the entities described in clauses (a) through (k); and

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

In addition to the above requirements, the State Digital Equity Plan developed with planning grant funds shall, at a minimum, include the following:

1. A stated vision for digital equity;

2. A digital equity needs assessment, including a comprehensive assessment of the baseline from which the State is working and the State's identification of the barriers to digital equity faced generally and by each of the covered populations in the State;

3. An asset inventory, including current resources, programs, and strategies that promote digital equity for each of the covered populations, whether publicly or privately funded, as well as existing digital equity plans and programs already in place among municipal, regional, and Tribal governments;

4. A coordination and outreach strategy, including opportunities for public comment by, collaboration with, and ongoing engagement representatives of each category of covered populations within the State and with the full range of stakeholders within the State;

5. A description of how municipal, regional, and/or Tribal digital equity plans will be incorporated into the State Digital Equity Plan;

6. An implementation strategy that is holistic and addresses the barriers to participation in the digital world, including affordability, devices, digital skills, technical support, and digital navigation. The strategy should (a) establish measurable goals, objectives, and proposed core activities to address the needs of covered populations, (b) set out measures ensuring the plan's sustainability and effectiveness across State communities, and (c) adopt mechanisms to ensure that the plan is regularly evaluated and updated;

7. An explanation of how the implementation strategy addresses gaps in existing state, local, and private efforts to address the barriers identified pursuant to Section IV.C.1.b.i, item 1, of the NOFO;

8. A description of how the State intends to accomplish the implementation strategy described above by engaging or partnering with:

    a. Workforce agencies such as state workforce agencies and state/local workforce boards and workforce organizations;

    b. Labor organizations and community-based organizations; and

    c. Institutions of higher learning, including but not limited to four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, education and training providers, and educational

service agencies;

9. A timeline for implementation of the plan; and

10. A description of how the State will coordinate its use of State Digital Equity Capacity Grant funding and its use of any funds it receives in connection with the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, other federal or private digital equity funding.

4.2.2 Project Narrative Submission Instructions

1. Click the **Get Started** button to begin the Project Narrative and Eligibility section.
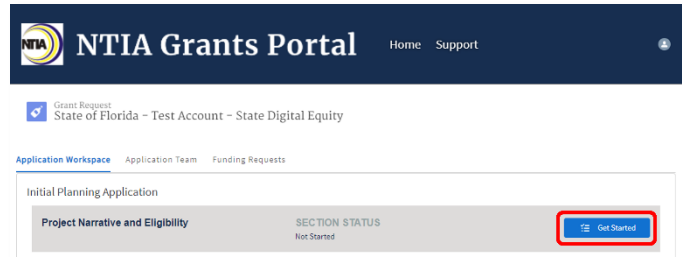
2. Enter Project Narrative and Eligibility information in the fields provided. A red asterisk (*) indicates a required field.

   Click the **drop-down** icon to select a certification response to the statement, "*Certification that, not later than 1 year after the date on which the Assistant Secretary awards the planning grant to the State, the administering entity for that State shall develop a State Digital Equity Plan. Such Digital Equity Plan shall comply with the requirements of Section 60304(c) of the Act. The administering entity shall submit the Digital Equity Plan to the Assistant Secretary within the one-year statutory deadline.*"
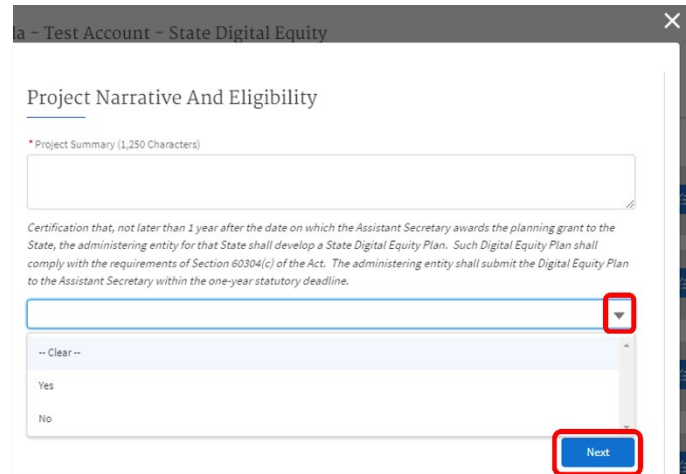
   Click the **Next** button to proceed to the next section in the Application Workspace.

4.3 SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)

Applicants are required to fill out, directly in the NTIA Grants Portal, an SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance. The table below provides instructions on each field that must be filled out. Applicants are encouraged to fill out the SF-424 template available on the NTIA Grants Portal and on the DE Planning Program webpage on www.InternetForAll.gov prior to filling out the form on the NTIA Grants Portal. Instructions on how to complete the SF-424 can be found on the grants.gov website, or at this link: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html.

> **Authorized Organizational Representative**
>
> The Applicant should identify their Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) in the SF 424. An AOR is a member of your organization authorized to submit applications in the NTIA Grants Portal on behalf of the organization. Note that in the submission of the application, only the AOR will be able to attest that all statements are true and submit the application.

Note: Some of these fields will pre-populate as a result of the data entered when the applicant's

organization is added.

4.3.1 Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

1. Click the **Get Started** button to begin the Form 424 section.

2. Click each **header** of the SF-424 form to expand or collapse the section on the screen. Some information previously provided will be pre-populated in various fields. Notice the **Steps** highlighted in the sidebar to the right.

3. Use the scroll bar to scroll to the next sections, click on each header to expand the section, and continue entering information for the remaining sections of the Form 424:

- Address

- Organizational Unit

- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application (Authorized Organizational Representative - AOR)

- Type of Applicant

4. Click the **Save and Next** button to proceed to the next step – Program and Project Information.

5. Click each **header** of the Program and Project Information step to expand or collapse the section on the screen. If needed, click the **Program Information** header to expand the section, enter program information using the fields provided. Some information previously provided will be pre-populated in various fields. Use the **scroll bar** to scroll to the next section to continue entering information for the remaining field(s). A red asterisk (*) indicates a required field.

6. Click the **Previous** button to go back to the previous step; click the **Save and Next** button to proceed to the next step – Estimated Funding.

4.3.3 Estimated Funding

7. Enter estimated funding information in the fields provided. A red asterisk (*) indicates a required field. The following fields must match:

    a. SF-424 18a must match SF-424A, 1e

    b. SF-424 18g must match SF-424A, 1g

    Click the **Previous** button to go back to the previous step; click the **Save and Next** button to proceed to the next step – Questions.

Estimated Funding

* Federal Estimated Funding   ⓘ
$0.00

* Applicant Estimated Funding   ⓘ
$0.00

* State Estimated Funding   ⓘ
$0.00

* Local Estimated Funding   ⓘ
$0.00

* Other Estimated Funding   ⓘ
$0.00

* f. Program Income   ⓘ
$0.00

TOTAL
$0.00

Previous | Save and Next

Steps
- Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 ✓
- Program and Project Information ✓
- Estimated Funding ◉
- Questions
- Authorized Organizational Representative

4.3.4 Questions

8. Click the **radio button** to select a response to the questions presented. A red asterisk (*) indicates a required field. For question 19, if you select response 'a.,' select a **State Review Date**. For question 20, if you select 'Yes,' provide an explanation in the space provided.

    Click the **Previous** button to go back to the previous step; click the **Save and Next** button to proceed to the next step – Authorized Organizational Representative.

Questions

* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?
- ◉ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on
- ○ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- ○ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

* State Review Date

* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation below.)
- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

* Please provide an explanation:

Previous | Save and Next

Steps
- Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 ✓
- Program and Project Information ✓
- Estimated Funding ✓
- Questions ◉
- Authorized Organizational Representative

4.3.5 Authorized Organizational Representative

9. Enter the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) information in the fields provided. A red asterisk (*) indicates a required field.

    The AOR will receive an email notification indicating that they have been added to the funding program application. If they are not already registered with the NTIA Grants Portal, they will receive a second email with a link to set their password to the Portal. (See the Registration Welcome Email with Initial Login Link section of this guide and follow the instructions.) If the current Applicant indicates themselves as the AOR, they will not receive an
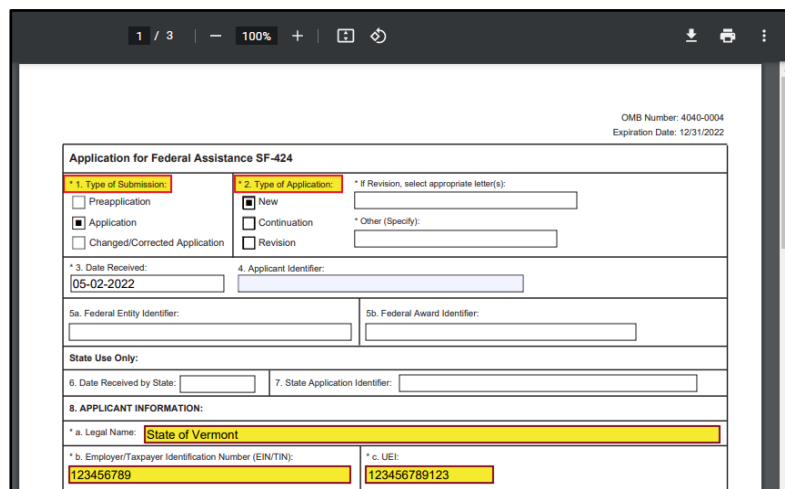
Authorized Organizational Representative

Prefix:

* First Name: | Middle Name: | * Last Name:

Suffix:

* Title:

* Telephone Nu... | Fax Number: | * Email:

Signature of Authorized Representative: | Date Signed:
Completed by Grants.gov upon su... | Completed by Grants.gov upon...

Previous | Save and Generate PDF

Steps
- Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 ✓
- Program and Project Information ✓
- Estimated Funding ✓
- Questions ✓
- Authorized Organizational Representative ◉

email, as they are already registered in the Portal.

Click the **Previous** button to go back to the previous step; click the **Save and Generate** PDF button to complete the Form 424 Section.

Once you click Save and Generate, a new tab will open with the generated PDF. The generated Form 424 will be saved on your application record in the Portal and will be available for attestation, review, and download by the AOR during the final step before submission.

If the designated AOR needs to be updated, return to the SF-424 to make the change. Refer to the instructions above for guidance.

10. Click the download button or the print button in the upper right corner to save a copy of the PDF for your records.

11. Return to the **Application Workspace** still open on the previous browser tab.

4.4 SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs)

Applicants are required to complete on the NTIA Grants Portal a SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs). Applicants are encouraged to fill out the SF-424A template available on the NTIA Grants Portal and on the DE Planning program webpage on www.InternetForAll.gov prior to filling out the form directly in the NTIA Grants Portal.

Note the special guidance below for completing the SF-424A for DE applications.

- Section A, Budget Summary
    - Enter on Line 1 under Column (b) the CFDA number: 11.032.
    - For new applications, leave Column (c) blank.
    - For new applications, leave Column (d) blank.
    - Enter in Column (e) the estimated federal funds needed to support the project for the first funding period.
    - Enter in Column (f) the amounts of non-federal funds that are intended to be contributed to support the project for the first funding period. **Leave blank if there are no non-**

- o For each line entry, enter in Column (g) the total of the amounts listed under federal and non-federal funding (Columns (e) and(f)).

- o Total is the sum of federal and non-federal funds per line entry.

- Section B, Budget Categories

  - o In row 6, under column headings (1) through (4), enter the titles of the same programs, functions, and activities shown on Lines 1-4, column (a), Section A.

  - o In 6-a, enter funds required for compensation of personnel from the selected program.

  - o In 6-b, enter funds required for compensation of fringe benefits from the selected program. Costs of employee fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to regular salaries and wages.

  - o In 6-c, enter funds required for travel from the selected program. Costs of project-related travel (i.e., transportation, lodging, subsistence, and other related items) by employees who are in travel status on official business of the NFE. Travel by non-employees such as consultants, contractors or subrecipients should be included under the "Contractual" category. Local travel for employees in non-travel status should be listed on the "Other" category.

  - o In 6-d, enter funds required for equipment from the selected program. "Equipment" means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) $5,000.

  - o In 9-e, enter funds required for supplies from the selected program. Tangible personal property other than those included in the Equipment category. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the NFE for financial statement purposes or $5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life.

  - o In 6-f, enter funds required for contractual costs from the selected program. Cost of all contracts except those that should be placed under other categories such as equipment, supplies, or construction.

  - o In 6-g, enter funds required for construction or major renovation for the selected program. Construction and major renovation are unallowable in the absence of specific statutory authority.

  - o In 6-h, enter the total of all other costs for the selected program not listed elsewhere in this form. Such costs, where applicable and allowed under the program, may include: individual consultant costs; local travel; insurance; medical and dental costs (non-personnel); professional service costs; depreciation of equipment and real property (when treated as a direct cost), printing and publications, training costs (tuition and stipends), staff development costs, and administrative costs (when treated as a direct cost).

  - o 6-i will total.

- o In 6-j, enter the amount of indirect cost in accordance with the program requirements, negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or the 10% de minimis rate. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both.

  - o 6-k will total.

  - o In 7, enter the estimated amount of total program income, if any, expected to be directly generated by or earned from this project. Program income includes but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under federally-funded projects, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under an award, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, and interest on loans made with award funds.

- Section C, Non-Federal Resources

  - o In 8-a, enter name of Grant Program, "State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program."

  - o 8-b-d is optional.

  - o 8-e will total.

  - o 12-b-e, required sum for each column.

- Section D, Forecasted Cash Needs

  - o 13, required sum of forecasted federal cash needs for one year.

  - o 14, required sum of forecasted non-federal cash needs.

  - o 15, total.

- Section E, Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project

  - o 16 through 20, required forecasted cash needs beyond one year.

4.4.1 Instructions for Filling Out and Submitting the SF-424A

1. Click the **Get Started** button to begin the Budget Form 424A section.
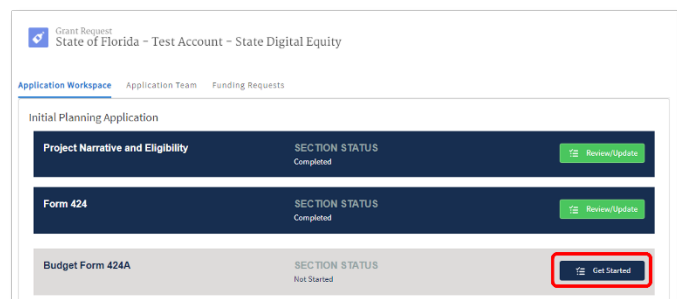
2. Enter Section A - Budget Summary information in the fields provided. Click the **Save and Next** button to proceed to the next section. Notice the Budget Summary **step** highlighted at the top of the modal window. Click the **X** in the upper right corner to close the modal window and return to the Application Workspace.

3. Enter Section B - Budget Categories information in the fields provided. Use the **scroll bar** to scroll to the next portion of Section B. Click the **Save and Next** button to save your work and proceed; click the **Previous** button to go back to the previous step.

4. Enter Non-Federal Resources & Forecasted Cash Needs information in the fields provided. Use the **scroll bar** to scroll to and complete Section D. Click the **Save and Next** button to save your work and proceed; click the **Previous** button to go back to the previous step.

5. Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed information in the fields provided. Use the **scroll bar** to scroll to and complete Section F. Click the **Save and Next** button to save your work and proceed; click the **Previous** button to go back to the previous step.

6. A new browser tab will open with the completed SF-424A PDF. Click the download button or the print button in the upper right corner.

7. Return to the **Application Workspace** still open on the previous browser tab.

4.5. Budget Narrative and Detailed Budget Justification

Applicants must upload both a Budget Narrative and a Detailed Budget Justification to the NTIA Grants Portal. Templates for both required documents are available on the DE Planning Program Page on the NTIA Grants Portal and also available on the DE Planning Program webpage on www.InternetForAll.gov.

The applicant must ensure that the total project budget information (i.e., costs and totals) across ALL budget forms and templates, including the SF-424, SF-424A, Budget Narrative, and Detailed Budget Justification match.

4.5.1 Budget Narrative

Applicants are required to submit a Budget Narrative that adequately describes all proposed activities and costs for their grant-funded project. The applicant must download the Microsoft Word file template (available on the NTIA Grants Portal and on the BEAD Program webpage on www.InternetForAll.gov), fill in all required information, and upload the completed file to the NTIA Grants Portal. **The upload must be provided as Word file, and not converted to a PDF prior to upload.** There is no word limit.

The following information should be included in the budget narrative, following the template provided on the NTIA Grants Portal and on the BEAD Program webpage on www.InternetForAll.gov:

- Applicant Name

- Organization Type

- Proposed Period of Performance

- Total Project Costs

- Total Federal Grant Request

The Applicant should provide the following information under the respective headers:

Personnel:

Each position that will be charging any portion of their time directly to the grant must be listed. For each

listing, you must include the title, percent of time they will be charging to the grant, and the annual salary for that position (if annual salary). If there are multiple positions with the same title, but different salaries, list them out separately. If there are multiple positions with the same title and salary, you can note that the position will have two individuals charging to that title and salary. Please note that this is only for the percent of time the individual will charge to the grant, which may be different than how much time and effort they spend on the project (some positions may have multiple funding streams). If known, provide the name of the person in each position.

Examples of administrative personnel expenses include costs attributable to: accounting, auditing, contracting, budgeting, and general legal services.

Fringe:

Fringe benefits are usually applicable to salaries and wages charged to an award. Each position that will be charging fringe to the grant award must be listed individually. For each listing you must include the fringe percentage (fringe benefit rate) and how long the fringe percentage will be applied (this usually matches the amount of time the position will charge to the grant program). Additionally, applicants must include a breakdown of what the fringe includes. If fringe amounts differ between positions, please explain why the percentages are different. Usually this is because some positions/people choose different fringe benefit packages than others. If fringe benefits are not computed by a percentage, please provide a breakdown for how the computation is done.

The applicant should not combine the fringe benefit costs with salaries and wages in the personnel category. Additionally, the applicant should specifically identify the amount of fringe benefit costs allocable to wages charged to staff performing direct programmatic activities and to staff performing administrative activities, respectively.

Travel:

Travel requested should be for staff travel only. Travel for consultants/contractors should be shown in the contractual category along with the consultant's fee, unless this charge is included in their general contract.

Each type of travel needs its own calculation. Each type of trip (e.g., local, domestic, international, conferences) needs to be broken down as much as possible, with you showing the calculations for how you got to the total dollar amount. Each entry should include the total per trip and all the calculations you made to get to that trip. Hotel costs should be inclusive of fees and taxes. If renting a car, please note if the costs will be shared between the travelers. If using per-diem, please note what it is included and for how many days. If per diem is prorated for travel days, please note this in the justification. If traveling to a conference where lunch/dinner will be served, please indicate if your entity has a policy around per-diem at conferences, and what the rate is for those specific days.

Each trip should include origin and destination, estimated costs and type of transportation, number of travelers, related lodging and per diem costs, a brief description of the travel involved, its purpose, and an explanation of how the proposed travel is necessary for successful completion of the project.

If some travel details are unknown then the basis for proposed costs should be explained (e.g., historical information) or estimated to the best of your ability.

Equipment:

As set forth in 2 C.F.R. 200.1, equipment is defined as an article of tangible personal property (including information technology systems) that has a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000. See also the definitions of capital assets, computing devices,

general purpose equipment, information technology systems, special purpose equipment, and supplies in 2 C.F.R. 200.1.

Each item must be listed individually and include the name (if applicable), type, cost, unit cost (if applicable), and purpose of the equipment. The purpose should justify the use of each item and relate the item to the allowable activities listed in the NOFO.

For every item over $5,000, the applicant must provide a lease vs. purchase analysis. This must accompany every individual equipment request over $5,000. If a lease vs. purchase analysis cannot be completed, please provide a statement explaining why not, and how you determined that the chosen procurement method is the most economical approach.

Supplies:

As set forth in 2 C.F.R. 200.1, supplies are defined as all tangible personal property other than those described in the definition of equipment in 2 C.F.R. 200.1. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes or $5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. See also the definitions of computing devices and equipment in 2 C.F.R. 200.1.

List all supplies by item when appropriate. An explanation is necessary for supplies costing more than $5,000 or more than 5 percent of the award, whichever is greater. Show unit costs of each item, the number needed, and the total amount. Provide a justification for supplies and relate them to the program objectives.

General office supplies may be shown by an estimated amount per month multiplied by the number of months in the budget period.

Contractual:

For each contract, the applicant will need to spell out what the contract is for and the cost information. If the contract is hours based, the applicant needs to note the total number of hours, during what period of time (contract period of performance), and the rate per hour. If the contract is a flat fee, the applicant needs to explain the rate and breakdown of the charges. For each contract, list and describe the tasks to be performed.

You must have and use documented procurement procedures, consistent with State, local, and Tribal laws and regulations and the standards of 2 CFR 200.318, for the acquisition of property or services required under a Federal award or subaward. Your documented procurement procedures must conform to the procurement standards identified in 2 CFR 200.317-327.

If selected, provide the name of the contractor/company/vendor. If not yet selected, explain the procurement process for selecting a contractor for the task(s).

Provide an explanation on how contractual support is selected (high level explanation of your competition process).

If the applicant expects to use a non-competitive procurement pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.320(c), you must explain which one or more of the following circumstances apply: 1) the aggregate dollar amount of the property or services does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold; 2) the item/service is available only from one source; 3) the public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation; 4) the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes a noncompetitive procurement in response to a written request from the non-Federal entity; or 5) competition is determined inadequate after solicitation of a number of sources.

For each contract, provide the known or estimated dates and length for the contract period of

performance. If there are sub-tasks with different periods of performance, write out each period of performance for each sub-task.

Construction: Total Amount $0

Construction is not allowable as part of a digital equity planning project.

Other:

This category contains both sub-awards and other items not included in the previous categories.

Sub-awards: A sub-award is an award provided by a pass-through entity to a sub-recipient for the sub-recipient to carry out part of a Federal award, including a portion of the scope of work or objectives. Provide separate budgets for each sub-award, regardless of the dollar value and indicate the basis for the cost estimates in the narrative.

Indirect Costs:

Indirect costs are costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be easily and specifically identified with a particular project or activity. These costs are sometimes called "overhead" costs. Indirect costs are different than direct costs, which can be attributed to direct project activities. Indirect administrative costs must align with the requirements in 2 CFR 200.414.

Examples of administrative expenses include costs attributable to: accounting, auditing, contracting, budgeting, and general legal services; facility occupancy costs, e.g., rent, utilities, insurance, taxes, and maintenance; general liability insurance that protects the organization (not directly related to a program); depreciation on buildings and equipment; general office supplies; and general and administrative salaries and wages.

4.5.2 Detailed Budget Justification

The Detailed Budget Justification requires all applicants to provide general budget information and detailed project costs. The applicant must download the Microsoft Excel file template (available on the NTIA Grants Portal and on the Digital Equity Planning Program webpage on www.InternetForAll.gov), fill in all required information, and upload the completed file to the NTIA Grants

Portal. The upload must be provided as an Excel file and not converted to a PDF prior to upload. The applicant should not alter the layout of the provided templates, except to insert additional line-items as needed.
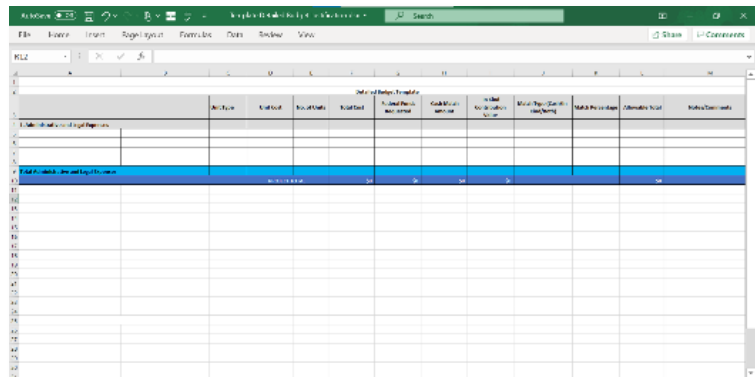
> **Tips for Completing Budget Documentation**
>
> - <u>All budget amounts must exactly match or tie out across all budget documentation</u>. For example, do not provide estimates or approximate amounts in the Budget Narrative that do not exactly match amounts the SF-424, SF-424A, and all relevant sections in the application
>
> - <u>All subtotals and totals (including line items) must be rounded to whole dollars without cents.</u> Although unit costs may include cents, once multiplied by the number of units, the result must be rounded to the nearest whole dollar. Amounts ending in $.49 or less should be rounded <u>down</u> to the nearest whole dollar, while amounts ending in $.50 or more should be rounded <u>up</u> to the next whole dollar. (For example, a subtotal of $2.17 would be rounded down to $2.00, while a subtotal of $2.72 would be rounded up to $3.00.) It is acceptable if .00 appears at the end of an amount; that is auto-formatted in some versions of the form.
>
> - <u>All direct and indirect costs will be evaluated for allowability, allocability, and reasonableness according to the relevant cost principles.</u> Only include costs that meet all of those criteria and note that additional detail or documentation may be requested.

4.5.3 Instructions for Submitting the Budget Narrative and the Detailed Budget Justification

1. Click the **Get Started** button to begin the Detailed Budget Justification and Budget Narrative section.

2. Click the **Upload Files** button, or drag and drop files into the space provided for each required document. A red asterisk (*) indicates that a document is required. Click **Cancel** to return to the Application Workspace.

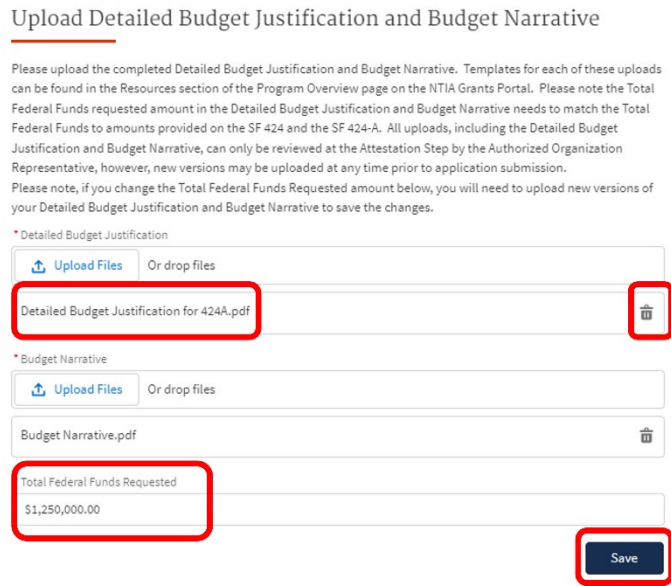3. Click the **Done** button.

4. Enter **Total Federal Funds Requested** in the field provided. Note: Budget amounts between Form 424 and Form 424A must match. Click the **Next** button to return to the Application Workspace.

   Click the **delete** icon to remove a file. Click the **Next** button to return to the Application Workspace.

4.6 Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement – as applicable

If indirect costs are included in the proposed budget, the applicant must upload a copy of the approved negotiated agreement if this rate was negotiated with a cognizant federal audit agency. If the rate was not established by a cognizant federal audit agency, provide a statement to this effect. If the successful applicant includes indirect costs in the budget and has not established an indirect cost rate with a cognizant federal audit agency, the applicant will be required to obtain such a rate in accordance with Section B.06 of the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions Dated November 12, 2020.

Alternatively, consistent with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), applicants that do not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge indirect costs to an award pursuant to a de minimis rate, in which case a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement is not required. Applicants proposing a de minimis rate pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f) should note this election as part of the budget portion of the application.

4.7 Additional Required Documents

All additional documents should be signed by the AOR identified in the SF-424. Ensure that the name listed and the signature match.

4.7.1 Form CD-511 – Certification Regarding Lobbying

The applicant must upload a completed Form CD-511 Certification Regarding Lobbying that certifies that Federal funds *have not* been used and *will not* be used for lobbying in connection with this request for Federal financial assistance. A fillable Form CD-511 is available to be downloaded and filled out on the DE Planning Program page on the NTIA Grants Portal and on the DE Planning Program webpage on www.InternetForAll.gov.

4.7.2 Standard Form-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

The Standard Form-LLL- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities must be completed and submitted for those applicants that need to disclose lobbying activities that have been secured to influence the outcome of a Federal action.

4.7.3 SAM.gov Registration

The System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is an official website of the U.S. Government. The SAM database is managed by the General Services Administration, which is responsible for acquiring goods and services for government agencies. In order to do business with any federal government agency, an Eligibly Entity must complete SAM registration on SAM.gov. **There is no cost to use SAM.gov.**

Applicants should upload evidence of SAM.gov registration of the Eligible Entity identified in the SF-424. The documentation should include the Legal Name, Unique Entity ID (UEI), and expiration date of the registration.

4.7.4 Instructions for Submitting Additional Required Documents

1. Click the **Get Started** button to begin the Additional Required Documents section.
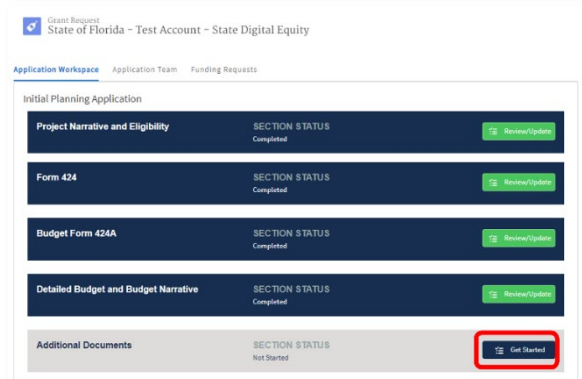
2. Click the **Upload Files** button to select the file(s) to upload, or drag and drop the file(s) into the upload files space provided. A red asterisk (*) indicates that a document is required. Click the **delete** icon to remove a file. Click the **Save** button to return to the Application Workspace.

   For the SAMS.gov Registration required document, a screenshot of the holder's SAMS.gov registration information page is sufficient.
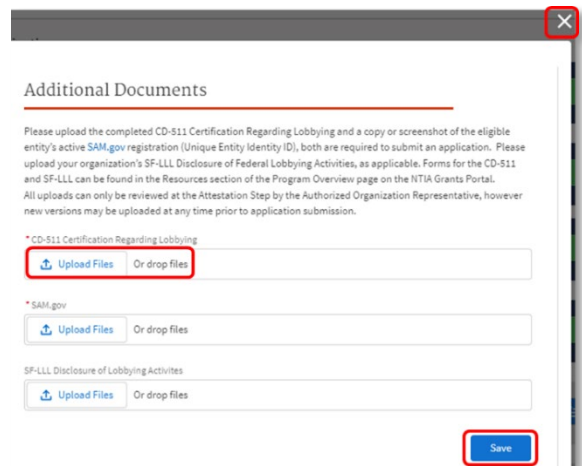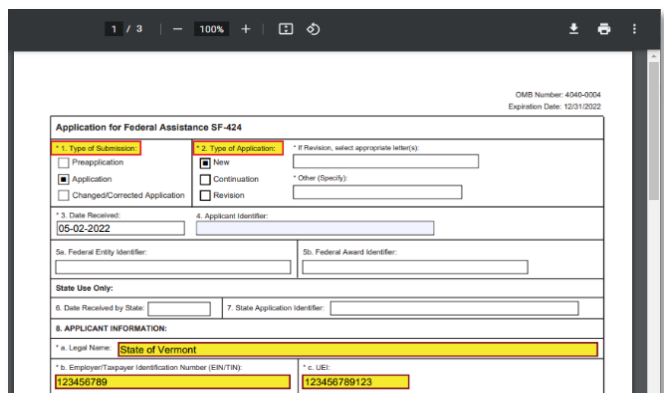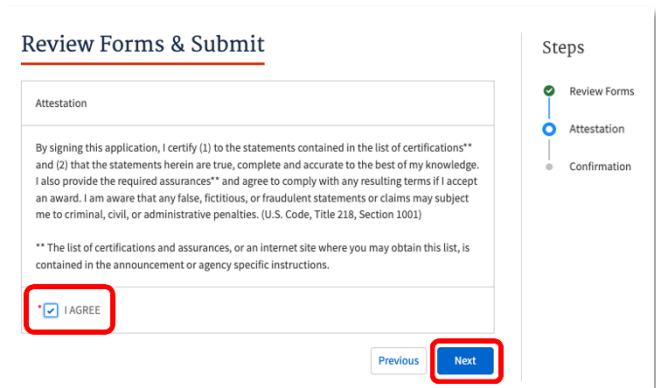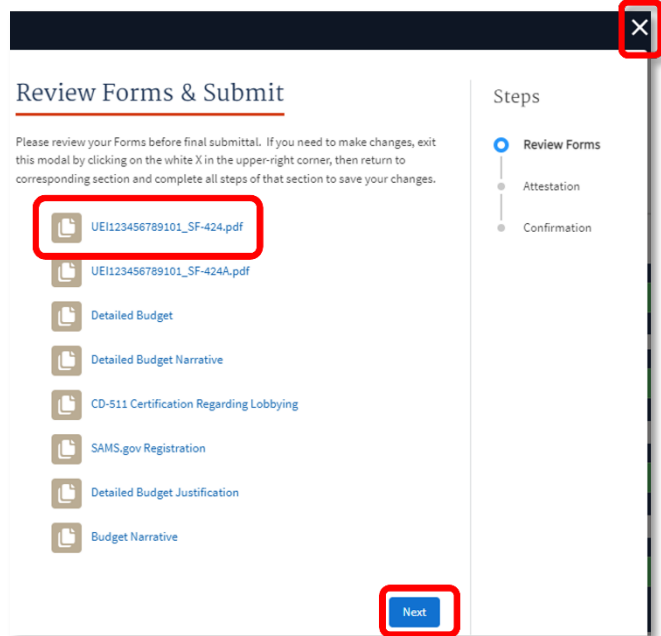

4.8 Attestation & Application Submission

Once the applicant has completed their application, it is advised to proofread the materials submitted and verify the consistency of data provided in more than one location (particularly with respect to the project budget). The final Attestation & Generate Forms & Submit section is accessible only to the designated AOR in Form 424; the Attestation & Generate Forms & Submit section is not accessible to other team member roles. The AOR must complete the Attestation & Generate Forms & Submit section.

By submitting this application, the applicant certifies that the information and responses in the application are material representations of fact and are true and correct.

1. Click the **Get Started** button to begin the Attestation & Application Submission section.
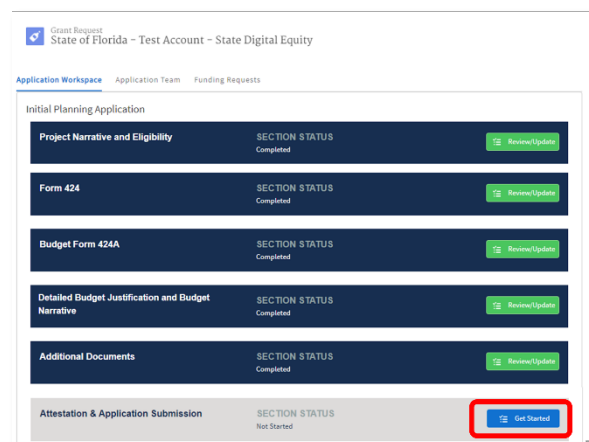
2. The AOR is responsible for reviewing all forms and application documents listed on the Review Forms & Submit screen before final submission. If changes are needed, exit this modal by clicking on the white **X** in the upper-right corner, then return to the corresponding section(s) in the Application Workspace and complete all steps of the section(s) to update and save changes to the form(s) and document(s).

3. Click the document **link** in the Review Forms & Submit modal screen to download the PDF form or document. It is recommended to download each form and document for archival purposes.

4. Click the **Next** button to get to the Attestation step.

5. Upon reviewing the forms for final submission, click the required **checkbox** next to "I AGREE", then click the **Next** button.

6. A PDF version of SF-424 with the AOR attested signature and date at the bottom of the form will open in a separate tab. Click the download button or the print button in the upper right corner to save a copy of the pdf for your records.

7. Click the **Next** button to complete the attestation step.

    Important: Once the AOR confirms submission by clicking Next, the application submission process has completed, and the application records will be locked and awaiting review by NTIA.
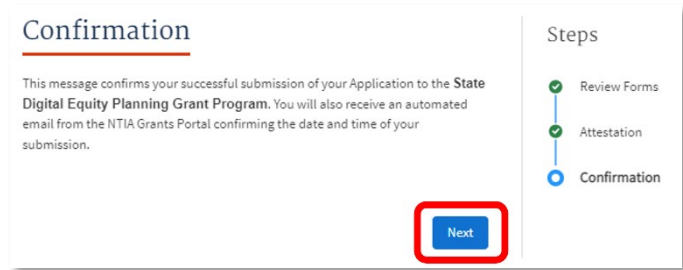
8. Upon confirming attestation, you will be returned to the Application Workspace where each section status is now marked as **Submitted**.
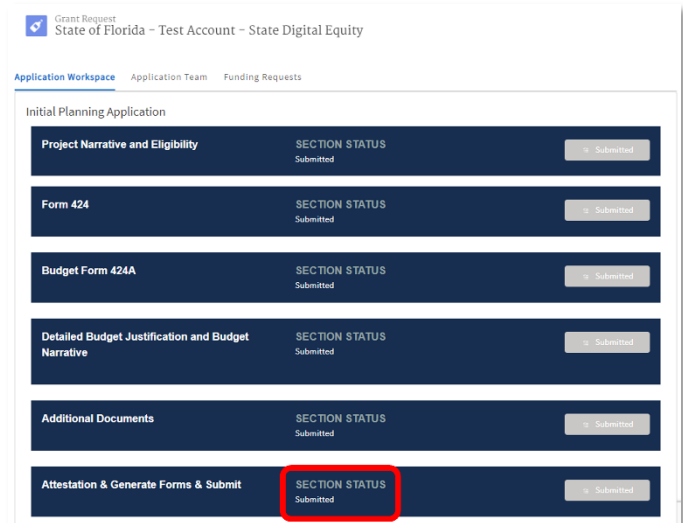
9. A confirmation email will be sent from the Portal system.


<div style="text-align:center">
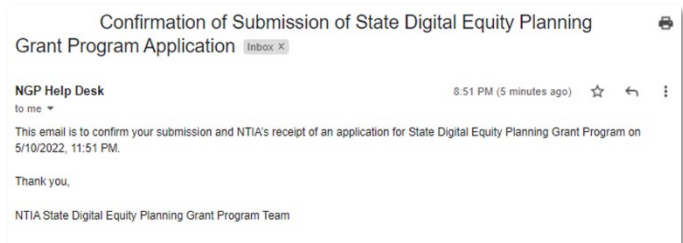
Congratulations!

You have successfully completed your application for the State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program. Please reach out to DigitalEquity@NTIA.gov for Digital Equity programmatic inquiries. Please reach out to NGPhelpdesk@ntia.gov if you have any outstanding technical questions or need additional guidance on submitting your application.

</div>

Appendix

## Repository of Documents Required for Download
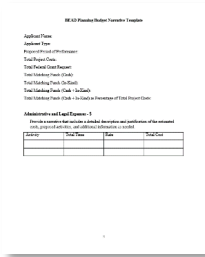
- **Budget Narrative:** Applicants will create and submit a budget narrative that adequately describes all proposed actives and costs for their grant-funded project. Applicants must complete the file template (available to download on the Digital Equity Program page and found in the DE Planning ZIP folder), fill in all required information and upload the file. The file must be uploaded as a Word file, and not converted to a PDF.
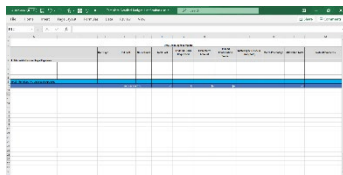
- **Detailed Budget Justification:** Applicants are required to submit a Detailed Budget Justification to provide general budget information and detailed project costs. The applicant must use the Microsoft Excel file template (available to download on the Digital Equity Program page and found in the DE Planning ZIP folder), fill in all required information, and upload the file to the NTIA Grants Portal.
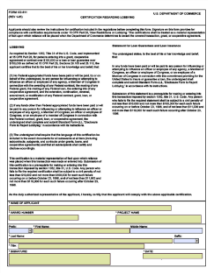
- **CD-511:** A copy of this form is available to download on the Digital Equity Program page and is found in the DE Planning Zip folder
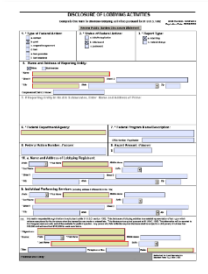
- **Standard Form-LLL:** Standard Form-LLL must be completed and submitted for those applicants that need to disclose lobbying activities that have been secured to influence the outcome of a Federal action. A fillable Form SF-LLL is available to download on the Digital Equity Program Page and can be found in found in the DE Planning ZIP folder.