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# INTERNET FOR ALL

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## Initial Proposal Template



U.S. Department of Commerce  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration

**Note:** *This document is intended solely to assist recipients in better understanding BEAD Initial Proposal and the requirements set forth in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for this program. This document does not and is not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, or the specific application requirements set forth in the NOFO. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, and the requirements set forth in the NOFO, shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in this document.*

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# Volume I Initial Proposal Requirements

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## 1.1 Existing Broadband Funding (Requirement 3)

- 1.1.1 **Attachment:** As a required attachment, submit the file identifying sources of funding, a brief description of the broadband deployment and other broadband-related activities, the total funding, the funding amount expended, and the remaining funding amount available. Eligible Entities may copy directly from their Five-Year Action Plans.

## 1.2 Unserved and Underserved Locations (Requirement 5)

- 1.2.1 **Attachment:** As a required attachment, submit one CSV file with the location IDs of each unserved location, including unserved locations in applicable Tribal Lands.

**Instructions:**

The Eligible Entity is required to identify each unserved location under the jurisdiction of the Eligible Entity (including unserved locations in applicable Tribal Lands) using the most recently published National Broadband Map as of the date of submission of the Initial Proposal. The CSV file must contain the location IDs of unserved locations (named “unserved.csv”) and must be a single-column file.

Refer to NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

- 1.2.2 **Attachment:** As a required attachment, submit one CSV file with the location IDs of each underserved location, including underserved locations in applicable Tribal Lands.

**Instructions:**

The Eligible Entity is required to identify each underserved location under the jurisdiction of the Eligible Entity (including underserved locations in applicable Tribal Lands) using the most recently published National Broadband Map as of the date of submission of the Initial Proposal. The CSV file must contain the location IDs of underserved locations (named “underserved.csv”) and must be a single-column file.

Refer to NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

- 1.2.3 **Date Selection:** Identify the publication date of the National Broadband Map that was used to identify the unserved and underserved locations.

**Instructions:**

Only the first edition of the National Broadband Map in each month can be selected. The publication date of the National Broadband Map cannot predate the submission of the Initial Proposal by more than 59 days.

### 1.3 Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) (Requirement 6)

- 1.3.1 **Text Box:** Describe how the statutory definition of “community anchor institution” (e.g., schools, libraries, health clinics) was applied, how eligible CAIs were identified, and how network connectivity needs were assessed, including the types of CAIs that the Eligible Entity intends to serve.

**Instructions:**

The Eligible Entity must include:

- a. A description of how the Eligible Entity applied the statutory definition of the term “community anchor institution” and identified all eligible CAIs (i.e., “a community anchor institution that lacks access to Gigabit-level broadband service”) in its jurisdiction and in applicable Tribal Lands.
- b. A description of how the Eligible Entity assessed the needs of eligible CAIs, and of what types of CAIs the Eligible Entity intends to receive service under the BEAD Program.
- c. A description of the categories of institutions proposed as CAIs, including during the public comment period, if any, that the Eligible Entity considered but declined to classify as an eligible CAI, and a description of the basis on which the Eligible Entity determined that such category of CAI does not facilitate greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations.
- d. If the Eligible Entity proposes service to one or more CAIs in a category not explicitly cited as a type of CAI in Section 60102(a)(2)(E) of the Infrastructure Act\*, the basis on which the Eligible Entity determined that such category of CAI facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations.

Refer to NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

\*Section 60102(a)(2)(E) of the Infrastructure Act cites CAIs categories as an entity such as a school, library, health clinic, health center, hospital or other medical provider, public safety entity, institution of higher education, public housing organization, or community support organization that facilitates greater use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, including, but not limited to, low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, children, the incarcerated, and aged individuals.

- 1.3.2 **Attachment:** As a required attachment, submit the CSV file (named cai.csv) that lists eligible community anchor institutions that require qualifying broadband service and do not currently have access to such service, to the best of the Eligible Entity’s knowledge.

**Instructions:**

The Eligible Entity must submit a CSV file with a list of eligible CAI locations identified within the jurisdiction of the Eligible Entity, using the data format provided by NTIA. The Eligible Entity must complete all mandatory fields in the file named “cai.csv” as outlined in Appendix A of the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice. Address information must identify the physical location of the community anchor institutions, not the administrative location. For example, the address must describe the location of the school building, not that of the board of education administrative building.

## 1.4 Challenge Process (Requirement 7)

### ***NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process Adoption***

- 1.4.1 **Yes/No Box:** Select if the Eligible Entity plans to adopt the NTIA Challenge Process Model for Requirement 7.

**Instructions:**

Eligible Entity must indicate whether it intends to adopt the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process for Requirement 7.

- 1.4.2 **Text Box:** If applicable, describe any modifications to classification of broadband serviceable locations in the Eligible Entity’s jurisdiction as “served,” “underserved,” or “unserved,” and provide justification for each modification.

**Instructions:**

Eligible Entities may, subject to the approval of the Assistant Secretary, modify the set of locations identified as eligible for funding on the National Broadband Map to reflect data not present in the National Broadband Map. If the Eligible Entity plans to modify the classification of locations, it must include a description of each proposed modification and each associated justification. If the Eligible Entity will not plan to modify the set of locations identified as eligible for funding on the National Broadband Map, indicate “N/A” in the response.

Refer to NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

### ***Deduplication of Funding***

- 1.4.3 **Yes/No Box:** Select if the Eligible Entity plans to use the BEAD Eligible Entity Planning Toolkit to identify existing federal enforceable commitments.

- 1.4.4 **Text Box:** Describe the process that will be used to identify and remove locations subject to enforceable commitments.

**Instructions:**

If the Eligible Entity plans to adopt the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process, the Eligible Entity must copy in the Model language and add in the unique information required from each Eligible Entity as specified in the Model.

If the Eligible Entity does not adopt the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge process, the Eligible Entity must:

- a. Describe the process used to identify and remove locations subject to enforceable commitments, and
- b. Outline whether or not the Eligible Entity plans to use the BEAD Eligible Entity Planning Toolkit.

If the Eligible Entity does not plan to use the BEAD Eligible Entity Planning Toolkit, the Eligible Entity must also include the following information:

- a. A description of the technology or tool to be used for deduplication, including explanation of its capacity to aggregate multiple data sources to create an accurate list of existing federal, state/territory, and local commitments.
- b. Assurance that the process to identify and remove enforceable commitments will analyze, at a minimum:
  - i. All programs included in the Broadband Funding Map published by FCC pursuant to Section 60105 of the Infrastructure Act as of the date of the deduplication of funding process.
  - ii. All state or territorial and local broadband deployment programs, including those that utilize funds from the Capital Projects Fund and the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds administered by the U.S. Treasury.

Refer to NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

- 1.4.5 **Attachment:** As a required attachment, submit the list of the federal, state/territorial, and local programs that will be analyzed to remove enforceable commitments from the set of locations eligible for BEAD funding.

**Instructions:**

The Eligible Entity must list the programs that will be analyzed to identify existing enforceable commitments. If the Eligible Entity plans to use the BEAD Eligible Entity Planning Toolkit and/or the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process, the Eligible Entity must list any state or territorial and local programs that constitute enforceable commitments.

If the Eligible Entity does not plan to use the BEAD Eligible Entity Planning Toolkit, the Eligible Entity must list the federal, state or territorial, and local programs that will be analyzed to identify existing enforceable commitments. These programs must include, at a minimum:

- a. All programs included in the Broadband Funding Map published by FCC pursuant to the Infrastructure Act § 60105, and
- b. All state or territorial and local broadband deployment programs, including those that utilize funds from the Capital Projects Fund and the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds administered by the U.S. Treasury.

Refer to NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

***Challenge Process Design***

- 1.4.6 **Text Box:** Describe the plan to conduct an evidence-based, fair, transparent, and expeditious challenge process.

**Instructions:**

If the Eligible Entity plans to adopt the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process, the Eligible Entity must copy in the Model language and add in the unique information required from each Eligible Entity, outlined in the Model.

If the Eligible Entity does not plan to adopt the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process, the Eligible Entity must include in its response:

- a. The proposed approach for the challenge process, including the publication of eligible locations, challenge phase, rebuttal phase, and final determination phase.
- b. Challenge types permitted, including the identification of community anchor institutions, existing Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL) and community anchor institution BEAD funding eligibility determinations, enforceable commitments, and planned service.
- c. Challengers permitted: units of local government, nonprofit organizations, and broadband service providers.
- d. Proposed evidentiary review process through which the Eligible Entity will review and make determinations based on challenges and rebuttals received. If the Eligible Entity decides to add any additional data sources to or remove from the list as outlined in Table 3 “Examples of Acceptable Evidence for BEAD Challenges and Rebuttals” in the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice, it must respond to question 1.4.7 and outline the proposed sources and requirements that will be considered acceptable evidence.
- e. Requirements for acceptable speed tests (e.g., number of speed tests, geographic distribution, speed test collection time), if applicable.
- f. Plan to ensure that sufficient opportunity and time is given to all relevant parties to initiate, rebut, and substantiate challenges, and that the challenge process standards of review are applied uniformly to all challenges submitted.
- g. The plan to ensure transparency, including:
  - i. The plan to publicly post documentation explaining the challenge process once it is approved by NTIA (prior to beginning the challenge process).
  - ii. The plan to post all submitted challenges and rebuttals before final determinations are made, including information from the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice.
  - iii. The plan to host a website, including the link to the website’s URL, if the hosting website already exists.
  - iv. The plan to inform units of local government, relevant nonprofit organizations, and broadband providers to the challenge process and its deadlines.
- h. The plan to ensure the protection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII), business confidential, and proprietary information, including anyone who will have access to any PII submitted through the challenge process (e.g., provider’s subscriber PII), including through state/territory public records processes.
- i. The overall timeline, with tentative dates of initiation and completion, for the challenge process. The timeline must also include the plan to ensure that:
  - i. The proposed challenge process will be completed within 120 days, starting with the initiation of the challenge submission window.
  - ii. The proposed challenge process will include a minimum 14-day window to file a rebuttal after the challenge is available on the challenge portal.
  - iii. Following NTIA approval, the proposed challenge process will publicly post final classification of eligible locations after resolving each challenge, at least 60 days before allocating grant funds for network deployment.

Refer to the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

1.4.6.1 **Optional Attachment:** As a required attachment only if the Eligible Entity is not using the NTIA BEAD Model Challenge Process, outline the proposed sources and requirements that will be considered acceptable evidence.

**Instructions:**

If the Eligible Entity plans to adhere to the sources outlined in Table 3 “Examples of Acceptable Evidence for BEAD Challenge and Rebuttals” in the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice, the Eligible Entity will not be required to complete the attachment. Otherwise, the Eligible Entity must list any proposed data sources that will be accepted as sufficient evidence that are not included in the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice. Additionally, the Eligible Entity must also indicate any data sources that are included in the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice that will not be accepted as sufficient evidence.

- To add an additional data source: the Eligible Entity must complete all columns and indicate in column 3 (“Proposed Change to NTIA BEAD Policy Notice”) whether the Eligible Entity will add or remove this data source as outlined in the NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice.
- To remove an approved data source: the Eligible Entity can skip columns 3 and 4 (i.e., “Data Source Requirements” and “Permissible Rebuttal”) and fill out only columns 1 and 2 (i.e., “Challenge Type” and “Data Source”).

Refer to NTIA BEAD Challenge Process Policy Notice for additional guidance.

## 1.5 Volume I Public Comment

1.5.1 **Text Box:** Describe the public comment period and provide a high-level summary of the comments received during the Volume I public comment period and how they were addressed by the Eligible Entity. The response must demonstrate:

- a. The public comment period was no less than 30 days; and
- b. Outreach and engagement activities were conducted to encourage feedback during the public comment period.

1.5.2 **Optional Attachment:** As an optional attachment, submit supplemental materials to the Volume I submission and provide references to the relevant requirements. Note that only content submitted via text boxes, certifications, and file uploads in sections aligned to Initial Proposal requirements in the NTIA Grants Portal will be reviewed, and supplemental materials submitted here are for reference only.

## Volume II Initial Proposal Requirements

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### 2.1 Objectives (Requirement 1)

- 2.1.1 **Text Box:** Outline the long-term objectives for deploying broadband; closing the digital divide; addressing access, affordability, equity, and adoption issues; and enhancing economic growth and job creation. Eligible Entities may directly copy objectives included in their Five-Year Action Plans.

### 2.2 Local, Tribal, and Regional Broadband Planning Processes (Requirement 2)

- 2.2.1 **Text Box:** Identify and outline steps that the Eligible Entity will take to support local, Tribal, and regional broadband planning processes or ongoing efforts to deploy broadband or close the digital divide. In the description, include how the Eligible Entity will coordinate its own planning efforts with the broadband planning processes of local and Tribal Governments, and other local, Tribal, and regional entities. Eligible Entities may directly copy descriptions in their Five-Year Action Plans.

### 2.3 Local Coordination (Requirement 4)

- 2.3.1 **Text Box:** Describe the coordination conducted, summarize the impact such coordination has on the content of the Initial Proposal, and detail ongoing coordination efforts. Set forth the plan for how the Eligible Entity will fulfil the coordination associated with its Final Proposal.
- 2.3.1.1 **Attachment:** As a required attachment, submit the Local Coordination Tracker Tool to certify that the Eligible Entity has conducted coordination, including with Tribal Governments, local community organizations, unions and work organizations, and other groups.
- 2.3.2 **Text Box:** Describe the formal tribal consultation process conducted with federally recognized Tribes, to the extent that the Eligible Entity encompasses federally recognized Tribes. If the Eligible Entity does not encompass federally recognized Tribes, note “Not applicable.”
- 2.3.2.1 **Optional Attachment:** As a required attachment only if the Eligible Entity encompasses federally recognized Tribes, provide evidence that a formal tribal consultation process was conducted, such as meeting agendas and participation lists.

## 2.4 Deployment Subgrantee Selection (Requirement 8)

### *Deployment Projects Subgrantee Selection Process & Scoring Approach*

- 2.4.1 **Text Box:** Describe a detailed plan to award subgrants to last-mile broadband deployment projects through a fair, open, and competitive process.
- 2.4.2 **Text Box:** Describe how the prioritization and scoring process will be conducted and is consistent with the BEAD NOFO requirements on pages 42 – 46.
- 2.4.2.1 **Attachment:** As a required attachment, submit the scoring rubric to be used in the subgrantee selection process for deployment projects. Eligible Entities may use the template provided by NTIA, or use their own format for the scoring rubric.
- 2.4.3 **Text Box:** Describe how the proposed subgrantee selection process will prioritize Unserved Service Projects in a manner that ensures complete coverage of all unserved locations prior to prioritizing Underserved Service Projects followed by prioritization of eligible CAIs.
- 2.4.4 **Text Box:** If proposing to use BEAD funds to prioritize non-deployment projects prior to, or in lieu of the deployment of services to eligible CAIs, provide a strong rationale for doing so. If not applicable to plans, note “Not applicable.”
- 2.4.5 **Text Box:** The proposed subgrantee selection process is expected to demonstrate to subgrantees how to comply with all applicable Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) and Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) requirements for their respective project or projects. Describe how the Eligible Entity will communicate EHP and BABA requirements to prospective subgrantees, and how EHP and BABA requirements will be incorporated into the subgrantee selection process.

### *Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Project Areas*

- 2.4.6 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will define project areas from which they will solicit proposals from prospective subgrantees. If prospective subgrantees will be given the option to define alternative proposed project areas, describe the mechanism for de-conflicting overlapping proposals to allow for like-to-like comparisons of competing proposals.
- 2.4.7 **Text Box:** If no proposals to serve a location or group of locations that are unserved, underserved, or a combination of both are received, describe how the Eligible Entity will engage with prospective subgrantees in subsequent funding rounds to find providers willing to expand their existing or proposed service areas or other actions that the Eligible Entity will take to ensure universal coverage.

- 2.4.8 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity intends to submit proof of Tribal Governments' consent to deployment if planned projects include any locations on Tribal Lands.

### ***Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold***

- 2.4.9 **Text Box:** Identify or outline a detailed process for identifying an Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold to be utilized during the subgrantee selection process. The explanation must include a description of any cost models used and the parameters of those cost models, including whether they consider only capital expenditures or include operational costs for the lifespan of the network.

- 2.4.10 **Text Box:** Outline a plan for how the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold will be utilized in the subgrantee selection process to maximize the use of the best available technology while ensuring that the program can meet the prioritization and scoring requirements set forth in Section IV.B.6.b of the BEAD NOFO. The response must describe:
- a. The process for declining a subgrantee proposal that exceeds the threshold where an alternative technology is less expensive.
  - b. The plan for engaging subgrantees to revise their proposals and ensure locations do not require a subsidy that exceeds the threshold.
  - c. The process for selecting a proposal that involves a less costly technology and may not meet the definition of Reliable Broadband.

### ***Deployment Subgrantee Qualifications***

- 2.4.11 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure prospective subgrantees deploying network facilities meet the minimum qualifications for financial capability as outlined on pages 72 – 73 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity response may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:
- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they are qualified to meet the obligations associated with a Project, that prospective subgrantees will have available funds for all project costs that exceed the amount of the grant, and that prospective subgrantees will comply with all Program requirements, including service milestones. To the extent the Eligible Entity disburses funding to subgrantees only upon completion of the associated tasks, the Eligible Entity will require each prospective subgrantee to certify that it has and will continue to have sufficient financial resources to cover its eligible costs for the Project until such time as the Eligible Entity authorizes additional disbursements.
  - b. Detail how the Eligible Entity plans to establish a model letter of credit substantially similar to the model letter of credit established by the FCC in connection with the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF).

- c. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit audited financial statements.
- d. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit business plans and related analyses that substantiate the sustainability of the proposed project.

2.4.11.1 **Optional Attachment:** As an optional attachment, submit application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, such as drafts of the Requests for Proposals for deployment projects, and narrative to crosswalk against requirements in the Deployment Subgrantee Qualifications section.

2.4.12 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for managerial capability as outlined on pages 73 – 74 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity response may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit resumes for key management personnel.
- b. Detail how it will require prospective subgrantees to provide a narrative describing their readiness to manage their proposed project and ongoing services provided.

2.4.13 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for technical capability as outlined on page 74 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity response may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they are technically qualified to complete and operate the Project and that they are capable of carrying out the funded activities in a competent manner, including that they will use an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce.
- b. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit a network design, diagram, project costs, build-out timeline and milestones for project implementation, and a capital investment schedule evidencing complete build-out and the initiation of service within four years of the date on which the entity receives the subgrant, all certified by a professional engineer, stating that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the requisite performance requirements to all locations served by the Project.

2.4.14 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for compliance with applicable laws as outlined on page 74 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the

Eligible Entity response may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to demonstrate that they are capable of carrying out funded activities in a competent manner in compliance with all applicable federal, state, territorial, and local laws.
- b. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to permit workers to create worker-led health and safety committees that management will meet with upon reasonable request.

2.4.15 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for operational capability as outlined on pages 74 – 75 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity response may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to certify that they possess the operational capability to qualify to complete and operate the Project.
- b. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to submit a certification that they have provided a voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution service for at least two (2) consecutive years prior to the date of their application submission or that they are a wholly owned subsidiary of such an entity and attest to and specify the number of years the prospective subgrantee or its parent company has been operating.
- c. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees that have provided a voice and/or broadband service, to certify that it has timely filed Commission Form 477s and the Broadband DATA Act submission, if applicable, as required during this time period, and otherwise has complied with the Commission's rules and regulations.
- d. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees that have operated only an electric transmission or distribution service, to submit qualified operating or financial reports, that it has filed with the relevant financial institution for the relevant time period along with a certification that the submission is a true and accurate copy of the reports that were provided to the relevant financial institution.
- e. In reference to new entrants to the broadband market, detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to provide evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the newly formed entity has obtained, through internal or external resources, sufficient operational capabilities.

2.4.16 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure that any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for providing information on ownership as outlined on page 75 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity response may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how the Eligible Entity will require prospective subgrantees to provide ownership information consistent with the requirements set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 1.2112(a)(1)-(7).

2.4.17 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure any prospective subgrantee deploying network facilities meets the minimum qualifications for providing information on other public funding as outlined on pages 75 – 76 of the BEAD NOFO. If the Eligible Entity opts to provide application materials related to the BEAD subgrantee selection process, the Eligible Entity response may reference those to outline alignment with requirements for this section. The response must:

- a. Detail how it will require prospective subgrantees to disclose for itself and for its affiliates, any application the subgrantee or its affiliates have submitted or plan to submit, and every broadband deployment project that the subgrantee or its affiliates are undertaking or have committed to undertake at the time of the application using public funds.
- b. At a minimum, the Eligible Entity shall require the disclosure, for each broadband deployment project, of: (a) the speed and latency of the broadband service to be provided (as measured and/or reported under the applicable rules), (b) the geographic area to be covered, (c) the number of unserved and underserved locations committed to serve (or, if the commitment is to serve a percentage of locations within the specified geographic area, the relevant percentage), (d) the amount of public funding to be used, (e) the cost of service to the consumer, and (f) the matching commitment, if any, provided by the subgrantee or its affiliates.

## 2.5 Non-Deployment Subgrantee Selection (Requirement 9)

2.5.1 **Text Box:** Describe a fair, open, and competitive subgrantee selection process for eligible non-deployment activities. Responses must include the objective means, or process by which objective means will be developed, for selecting subgrantees for eligible non-deployment activities. If the Eligible Entity does not intend to subgrant for non-deployment activities, indicate such.

2.5.2 **Text Box:** Describe the Eligible Entity's plan for the following:

- a. How the Eligible Entity will employ preferences in selecting the type of non-deployment initiatives it intends to support using BEAD Program funds.
- b. How the non-deployment initiatives will address the needs of residents within the jurisdiction.
- c. The ways in which engagement with localities and stakeholders will inform the selection of eligible non-deployment activities.
- d. How the Eligible Entity will determine whether other uses of the funds might be more effective in achieving the BEAD Program's equity, access, and deployment goals.

- 2.5.3 **Text Box:** Describe the Eligible Entity’s plan to ensure coverage to all unserved and underserved locations prior to allocating funding to non-deployment activities.
- 2.5.4 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity will ensure prospective subgrantees meet the general qualifications outlined on pages 71 – 72 of the BEAD NOFO.

## 2.6 Eligible Entity Implementation Activities (Requirement 10)

- 2.6.1 **Text Box:** Describe any initiatives the Eligible Entity proposes to implement as the recipient without making a subgrant, and why it proposes that approach.

## 2.7 Labor Standards and Protection (Requirement 11)

- 2.7.1 **Text Box:** Describe the specific information that prospective subgrantees will be required to provide in their applications and how the Eligible Entity will weigh that information in its competitive subgrantee selection processes. Information from prospective subgrantees must demonstrate the following and must include information about contractors and subcontractors:
- a. Prospective subgrantees’ record of past compliance with federal labor and employment laws, which:
    - i. Must address information on these entities’ compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband deployment projects in the last three years;
    - ii. Should include a certification from an Officer/Director-level employee (or equivalent) of the prospective subgrantee evidencing consistent past compliance with federal labor and employment laws by the subgrantee, as well as all contractors and subcontractors; and
    - iii. Should include written confirmation that the prospective subgrantee discloses any instances in which it or its contractors or subcontractors have been found to have violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.
  - b. Prospective subgrantees’ plans for ensuring compliance with federal labor and employment laws, which must address the following:
    - i. How the prospective subgrantee will ensure compliance in its own labor and employment practices, as well as that of its contractors and subcontractors, including:

1. Information on applicable wage scales and wage and overtime payment practices for each class of employees expected to be involved directly in the physical construction of the broadband network; and
2. How the subgrantee will ensure the implementation of workplace safety committees that are authorized to raise health and safety concerns in connection with the delivery of deployment projects.

2.7.2 **Text Box:** Describe in detail whether the Eligible Entity will make mandatory for all subgrantees (including contractors and subcontractors) any of the following and, if required, how it will incorporate them into binding legal commitments in the subgrants it makes:

- a. Using a directly employed workforce, as opposed to a subcontracted workforce;
- b. Paying prevailing wages and benefits to workers, including compliance with Davis-Bacon and Service Contract Act requirements, where applicable, and collecting the required certified payrolls;
- c. Using project labor agreements (i.e., pre-hire collective bargaining agreements between unions and contractors that govern terms and conditions of employment for all workers on a construction project);
- d. Use of local hire provisions;
- e. Commitments to union neutrality;
- f. Use of labor peace agreements;
- g. Use of an appropriately skilled workforce (e.g., through Registered Apprenticeships or other joint labor-management training programs that serve all workers, particularly those underrepresented or historically excluded);
- h. Use of an appropriately credentialed workforce (i.e., satisfying requirements for appropriate and relevant pre-existing occupational training, certification, and licensure); and
- i. Taking steps to prevent the misclassification of workers.

## 2.8 Workforce Readiness (Requirement 12)

2.8.1 **Text Box:** Describe how the Eligible Entity and their subgrantees will advance equitable workforce development and job quality objectives to develop a skilled, diverse workforce. At a minimum, this response must clearly provide each of the following, as outlined on page 59 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. A description of how the Eligible Entity will ensure that subgrantees support the development and use of a highly skilled workforce capable of carrying out work in a manner that is safe and effective;
- b. A description of how the Eligible Entity will develop and promote sector-based partnerships among employers, education and training providers, the public workforce system, unions and worker organizations, and community-based

organizations that provide relevant training and wrap-around services to support workers to access and complete training (such as child care, transportation, mentorship, etc.), to attract, train, retain, or transition to meet local workforce needs and increase high-quality job opportunities;

- c. A description of how the Eligible Entity will plan to create equitable on-ramps into broadband-related jobs, maintain job quality for new and incumbent workers engaged in the sector; and continually engage with labor organizations and community-based organizations to maintain worker voice throughout the planning and implementation process; and
- d. A description of how the Eligible Entity will ensure that the job opportunities created by the BEAD Program and other broadband funding programs are available to a diverse pool of workers.

**2.8.2 Text Box:** Describe the information that will be required of prospective subgrantees to demonstrate a plan for ensuring that the project workforce (including contractors and subcontractors) will be an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce. These plans should include the following:

- a. The ways in which the prospective subgrantee will ensure the use of an appropriately skilled workforce, e.g., through Registered Apprenticeships or other joint labor-management training programs that serve all workers;
- b. The steps that will be taken to ensure that all members of the project workforce will have appropriate credentials, e.g., appropriate and relevant pre-existing occupational training, certification, and licensure;
- c. Whether the workforce is unionized;
- d. Whether the workforce will be directly employed or whether work will be performed by a subcontracted workforce; and
- e. The entities that the proposed subgrantee plans to contract and subcontract with in carrying out the proposed work.

If the project workforce or any subgrantee's, contractor's, or subcontractor's workforce is not unionized, the subgrantee must also provide with respect to the non-union workforce:

- a. The job titles and size of the workforce (FTE positions, including for contractors and subcontractors) required to carry out the proposed work over the course of the project and the entity that will employ each portion of the workforce;
- b. For each job title required to carry out the proposed work (including contractors and subcontractors), a description of:
  - i. Safety training, certification, and/or licensure requirements (e.g., OSHA 10, OSHA 30, confined space, traffic control, or other training as relevant depending on title and work), including whether there is a robust in-house training program with established requirements tied to certifications, titles; and
  - ii. Information on the professional certifications and/or in-house training in place to ensure that deployment is done at a high standard.

## **2.9 Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs)/ Women's Business Enterprises (WBEs)/ Labor Surplus Firms Inclusion (Requirement 13)**

- 2.9.1 **Text Box:** Describe the process, strategy, and the data tracking method(s) the Eligible Entity will implement to ensure that minority businesses, women-owned business enterprises (WBEs), and labor surplus area firms are recruited, used, and retained when possible.
- 2.9.2 **Check Box:** Certify that the Eligible Entity will take all necessary affirmative steps to ensure minority businesses, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible, including the following outlined on pages 88 – 89 of the BEAD NOFO:
- a. Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women’s business enterprises on solicitation lists;
  - b. Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
  - c. Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises;
  - d. Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises;
  - e. Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce; and
  - f. Requiring subgrantees to take the affirmative steps listed above as it relates to subcontractors.

## **2.10 Cost and Barrier Reduction (Requirement 14)**

- 2.10.1 **Text Box:** Identify steps that the Eligible Entity has taken or will take to reduce costs and barriers to deployment. Responses may include but not be limited to the following:
- a. Promoting the use of existing infrastructure;
  - b. Promoting and adopting dig-once policies;
  - c. Streamlining permitting processes;
  - d. Streamlining cost-effective access to poles, conduits, easements; and
  - e. Streamlining rights of way, including the imposition of reasonable access requirements.

## **2.11 Climate Assessment (Requirement 15)**

2.11.1 **Text Box:** Describe the Eligible Entity’s assessment of climate threats and proposed mitigation methods. If an Eligible Entity chooses to reference reports conducted within the past five years to meet this requirement, it may attach this report and must provide a crosswalk narrative, with reference to page numbers, to demonstrate that the report meets the five requirements below. If the report does not specifically address broadband infrastructure, provide additional narrative to address how the report relates to broadband infrastructure. At a minimum, this response must clearly do each of the following, as outlined on pages 62 – 63 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. Identify the geographic areas that should be subject to an initial hazard screening for current and projected future weather and climate-related risks and the time scales for performing such screenings;
- b. Characterize which projected weather and climate hazards may be most important to account for and respond to in these areas and over the relevant time horizons;
- c. Characterize any weather and climate risks to new infrastructure deployed using BEAD Program funds for the 20 years following deployment;
- d. Identify how the proposed plan will avoid and/or mitigate weather and climate risks identified; and
- e. Describe plans for periodically repeating this process over the life of the Program to ensure that evolving risks are understood, characterized, and addressed, and that the most up-to-date tools and information resources are utilized.

2.11.1.1 **Optional Attachment:** As an optional attachment, submit any relevant reports conducted within the past five years that may be relevant for this requirement and will be referenced in the text narrative above.

## 2.12 Low-Cost Broadband Service Option (Requirement 16)

2.12.1 **Text Box:** Describe the low-cost broadband service option(s) that must be offered by subgrantees as selected by the Eligible Entity, including why the outlined option(s) best services the needs of residents within the Eligible Entity’s jurisdiction. At a minimum, this response must include a definition of low-cost broadband service option that clearly addresses the following, as outlined on page 67 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. All recurring charges to the subscriber, as well as any non-recurring costs or fees to the subscriber (e.g., service initiation costs);
- b. The plan’s basic service characteristics (download and upload speeds, latency, any limits on usage or availability, and any material network management practices);
- c. Whether a subscriber may use any Affordable Connectivity Benefit subsidy toward the plan’s rate; and
- d. Any provisions regarding the subscriber’s ability to upgrade to any new low-cost service plans offering more advantageous technical specifications.

2.12.2 **Check Box:** Certify that all subgrantees will be required to participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program or any successor program.

## 2.13 Middle-Class Affordability Plans

2.13.1 **Text Box:** Describe a middle-class affordability plan that details how high-quality broadband services will be made available to all middle-class families in the BEAD-funded network's service area at reasonable prices. This response must clearly provide a reasonable explanation of how high-quality broadband services will be made available to all middle-class families in the BEAD-funded network's service area at reasonable prices.

## 2.14 Use of 20 Percent of Funding (Requirement 17)

- 2.14.1 **Text Box:** Describe the Eligible Entity's planned use of any funds being requested, which must address the following:
- a. If the Eligible Entity does not wish to request funds during the Initial Proposal round, it must indicate no funding requested and provide the rationale for not requesting funds.
  - b. If the Eligible Entity is requesting less than or equal to 20 percent of funding allocation during the Initial Proposal round, it must detail the amount of funding requested for use upon approval of the Initial Proposal, the intended use of funds, and how the proposed use of funds achieves the statutory objective of serving all unserved / underserved locations.
  - c. If the Eligible Entity is requesting more than 20 percent (up to 100 percent) of funding allocation during the Initial Proposal round, it must detail the amount of funding requested for use upon approval of the Initial Proposal, the intended use of funds, how the proposed use of funds achieves the statutory objective of serving all unserved / underserved locations, and provide rationale for requesting funds greater than 20 percent of the funding allocation.
- 2.14.2 **Financial Data Entry:** Enter the amount of the Initial Proposal Funding Request. If not requesting Initial Proposal funds, enter '\$0.00.'

2.14.3 **Check Box:** Certify that the Eligible Entity will adhere to BEAD Program requirements regarding Initial Proposal funds usage. If the Eligible Entity is not requesting funds in the Initial Proposal round and will not submit the Initial Proposal Funding Request, note “Not applicable.”

## 2.15 Eligible Entity Regulatory Approach (Requirement 18)

### 2.15.1 Text Box:

- a. Disclose whether the Eligible Entity will waive all laws of the Eligible Entity concerning broadband, utility services, or similar subjects, whether they predate or postdate enactment of the Infrastructure Act that either (a) preclude certain public sector providers from participation in the subgrant competition or (b) impose specific requirements on public sector entities, such as limitations on the sources of financing, the required imputation of costs not actually incurred by the public sector entity, or restrictions on the service a public sector entity can offer.
- b. If the Eligible Entity will not waive all such laws for BEAD Program project selection purposes, identify those that it will not waive (using the Excel attachment) and their date of enactment and describe how they will be applied in connection with the competition for subgrants. If there are no applicable laws, note such.

2.15.1.1 **Optional Attachment:** As a required attachment only if the Eligible Entity will not waive laws for BEAD Program project selection purposes, provide a list of the laws that the Eligible Entity will not waive for BEAD Program project selection purposes, using the Eligible Entity Regulatory Approach template provided.

## 2.16 Certification of Compliance with BEAD Requirements (Requirement 19)

2.16.1 **Check Box:** Certify the Eligible Entity’s intent to comply with all applicable requirements of the BEAD Program, including the reporting requirements.

2.16.2 **Text Box:** Describe subgrantee accountability procedures, including how the Eligible Entity will, at a minimum, employ the following practices outlined on page 51 of the BEAD NOFO:

- a. Distribution of funding to subgrantees for, at a minimum, all deployment projects on a reimbursable basis (which would allow the Eligible Entity to withhold funds if the subgrantee fails to take the actions the funds are meant to subsidize);

- b. The inclusion of clawback provisions (i.e., provisions allowing recoupment of funds previously disbursed) in agreements between the Eligible Entity and any subgrantee;
- c. Timely subgrantee reporting mandates; and
- d. Robust subgrantee monitoring practices.

2.16.3 **Check Box:** Certify that the Eligible Entity will account for and satisfy authorities relating to civil rights and nondiscrimination in the selection of subgrantees.

2.16.4 **Check Box:** Certify that the Eligible Entity will ensure subgrantee compliance with the cybersecurity and supply chain risk management requirements on pages 70 - 71 of the BEAD NOFO to require prospective subgrantees to attest that:

*Cybersecurity*

- 1) The prospective subgrantee has a cybersecurity risk management plan (the plan) in place that is either: (a) operational, if the prospective subgrantee is providing service prior to the award of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized upon providing service, if the prospective subgrantee is not yet providing service prior to the grant award;
- 2) The plan reflects the latest version of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity (currently Version 1.1) and the standards and controls set forth in Executive Order 14028 and specifies the security and privacy controls being implemented;
- 3) The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and
- 4) The plan will be submitted to the Eligible Entity prior to the allocation of funds. If the subgrantee makes any substantive changes to the plan, a new version will be submitted to the Eligible Entity within 30 days.

*Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM)*

- 1) The prospective subgrantee has a SCRM plan in place that is either: (a) operational, if the prospective subgrantee is already providing service at the time of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized, if the prospective subgrantee is not yet providing service at the time of grant award;
- 2) The plan is based upon the key practices discussed in the NIST publication NISTIR 8276, Key Practices in Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Observations from Industry and related SCRM guidance from NIST, including NIST 800-161, Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management Practices for Systems and Organizations and specifies the supply chain risk management controls being implemented;
- 3) The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and
- 4) The plan will be submitted to the Eligible Entity prior to the allocation of funds. If the subgrantee makes any substantive changes to the plan, a new version will be submitted to the Eligible Entity within 30 days. The Eligible Entity must provide a subgrantee's plan to NTIA upon NTIA's request.

## **2.17 Volume II Public Comment**

2.17.1 **Text Box:** Describe the public comment period and provide a high-level summary of the comments received during the Volume II public comment period and how they were addressed by the Eligible Entity. The response must demonstrate:

- a. The public comment period was no less than 30 days; and
- b. Outreach and engagement activities were conducted to encourage feedback during the public comment period.

2.17.2 **Optional Attachment:** As an optional attachment, submit supplemental materials to the Volume II submission and provide references to the relevant requirements. Note that only content submitted via text boxes, certifications, and file uploads in sections aligned to Initial Proposal requirements in the NTIA Grants Portal will be reviewed, and supplemental materials submitted here are for reference only.

# Initial Proposal Template Change Log

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| Version Number | Page Number | Date of Change (mm/dd/yyyy) | Location of Change | Description of Change  |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1.1            | 12          | 09/29/2023                  | 2.4.10             | Added text to the intake question for the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold for clarification |