



Digital Equity Act of 2021 Competitive Grant Program Applicant Training Part 1

Funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

*Administered by the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and
Information Administration (NTIA)*



Disclaimer



This document is intended solely to assist applicants in better understanding the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program and the requirements set forth in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and follow-on policies and guidance for this program. This document does not and is not intended to supersede, modify, or otherwise alter applicable statutory or regulatory requirements, the terms and conditions of the award, or the specific application requirements set forth in the NOFO. In all cases, statutory and regulatory mandates, the terms and conditions of the award, the requirements set forth in the NOFO, and follow-on policies and guidance, shall prevail over any inconsistencies contained in this document.



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INTRODUCTION



Introduction

This training is the first of five **Applicant Trainings** for the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program. This training is intended to assist applicants in better understanding the standard grants forms listed in the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

TRAINING GOALS OF PART 1

- 1 Review what an **SF-424** (Application for Federal Assistance) is and how to complete it
- 2 Review the standard grant forms related to lobbying including the **CD-511** and **SF-LLL**
- 3 Understand what a **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement** (NICRA) is and how to obtain one
- 4 Review common questions about **NICRA**



SF- 424 - REQUIRED

Training Goals



REVIEW THE PURPOSE OF THE SF-424



PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO COMPLETE THE FORM



IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR REFERENCE AND TRAINING



SF-424 Purpose

- The **SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance** is a standard form that provides basic information to the federal government on grant applicants.
- To be eligible for State Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program funding, all recipients **MUST complete** and submit an SF-424.
- **Tip:** While the contents of SF-424 will be inputted directly into the NTIA Grants Portal (NGP), applicants are encouraged to first complete the fillable form as a **DRAFT** to ensure they have all the necessary information before entering information in the portal.

Section	SECTION STATUS	Action
1. General Applicant Information	Completed	Review/Update
2. Project Narrative	Completed	Review/Update
3. Budget	Completed	Review/Update
4. Applicant Capability	Completed	Review/Update
5. Project Information	Completed	Review/Update
6. Match	Completed	Review/Update
7. Other Funding Sources	Completed	Review/Update
8. Certifications and Assurances	Completed	Review/Update
9. SF-424	Not Started	Get Started
10. Standard Forms	Not Started	Get Started
Attestation and Application Submission <small>This form is not yet complete and may only be submitted by the AOR. Make sure all sections are complete and then ask your ADR to submit.</small>	Not Started	Get Started

SF-424 Submission in the NGP

SF-424 Instructions | Fields 1-8d



In Fields 1 and 2, indicate that the submission is an **application** and **new**.

Field 3 will auto-populate the application when submitted in the NGP

Applicants must complete Field 8a, b, c, and d. Ensure that the legal name, EIN, UEI, and address **match the information provided in the SAM.gov registration**

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424		
<p>* 1. Type of Submission:</p> <input type="radio"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="radio"/> Application <input type="radio"/> Changed/Corrected Application	<p>* 2. Type of Application:</p> <input checked="" type="radio"/> New <input type="radio"/> Continuation <input type="radio"/> Revision	<p>* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):</p> <input type="text"/> <p>* Other (Specify):</p> <input type="text"/>
<p>* 3. Date Received:</p> <input type="text"/>	<p>4. Applicant Identifier:</p> <input type="text"/>	
<p>5a. Federal Entity Identifier:</p> <input type="text"/>	<p>5b. Federal Award Identifier:</p> <input type="text"/>	
<p>State Use Only:</p>		
<p>6. Date Received by State:</p> <input type="text"/>	<p>7. State Application Identifier:</p> <input type="text"/>	
<p>8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:</p>		
<p>* a. Legal Name:</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):</p> <input type="text"/>	<p>* c. UEI:</p> <input type="text"/>	
<p>d. Address:</p>		
<p>* Street1:</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>Street2:</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>* City:</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>County/Parish:</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>* State:</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>Province:</p> <input type="text"/>		
<p>* Country:</p> <input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>		
<p>* Zip / Postal Code:</p> <input type="text"/>		

○ Required ○ Not Required

Applicants are not required to complete Fields 4, 5A, 5B, 6 or 7



SF-424 Instructions | Fields 8e- 8f



○ Required ○ Not Required

Section 8E is not required but is recommended

e. Organizational Unit:	
Department Name: <input type="text"/>	Division Name: <input type="text"/>
f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:	
Prefix: <input type="text"/>	* First Name: <input type="text"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	
Title: <input type="text"/>	
Organizational Affiliation: <input type="text"/>	
* Telephone Number: <input type="text"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text"/>
* Email: <input type="text"/>	

In Field 8F, provide the name and contact information of the person involved in the application. **This should be the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).**



SF-424 Instructions | Fields 9- 12



Select applicant type from the drop-down menu in Field 9

* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type: [Green highlighted dropdown menu]
Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type: [Blue highlighted dropdown menu]
Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type: [Blue highlighted dropdown menu]
* Other (specify): [White text input field]
* 10 Name of Federal Agency: Department of Commerce, NTIA
11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: [Blue highlighted text input field]
CFDA Title: [Blue highlighted text input field]
* 12 Funding Opportunity Number: NTIA-DECGP-2024
* Title: DIGITAL EQUITY COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

○ Required ○ Not Required

Enter **Department of Commerce, NTIA** in Field 10

Applicants are not required to complete Field 11

Field 12 should list the NOFO number as **NTIA-DECGP-2024**



SF-424 Instructions | Fields 13- 15



○ Required ○ Not Required

Applicants are not required to complete Fields 13 and 14, but it is recommended to complete Section 14 if multiple areas are affected by the project

In Field 15, enter a descriptive title for your project

13. Competition Identification Number: <input type="text"/> Title: <input type="text"/>
14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.): <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project: <input type="text"/>
Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions. <input type="button" value="Add Attachments"/> <input type="button" value="Delete Attachments"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachments"/>



SF-424 Instructions | Fields 16- 19

In Fields 16A and 16B, enter the Congressional Districts of the Applicant and the Program/Project, **if applicable**. For 16A, the format should be [State abbreviation]-[2 digit congressional district #]. Ex AL-02. For 16B, the answer can be “[State abbreviation]-all”.

Applicants can reference www.census.gov/mycd/ to determine their Congressional Districts

Select the appropriate response in Field 19.

Note – If your State or Territory is included on the Intergovernmental Review List, select response option ‘a.’ and select a State Review Date.

If your State or Territory is not included on this list, select response option ‘b’. Do NOT select option ‘c,’ as this program is covered under E.O. 12372

Required Not Required

16. Congressional Districts Of:	
* a. Applicant <input type="text"/>	* b. Program/Project <input type="text"/>
Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
17. Proposed Project:	
* a. Start Date: <input type="text"/>	* b. End Date: <input type="text"/>
18. Estimated Funding (\$):	
* a. Federal	<input type="text"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text"/>
* c. State	<input type="text"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text"/>
19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?	
<input type="radio"/> a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on <input type="text"/> .	
<input type="radio"/> b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.	
<input type="radio"/> c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.	

Applicants should pay special attention to Fields 17 and 18.

The proposed project start, and end dates entered in Field 17 should **align with the anticipated project Period of Performance** * (e.g., January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2029)

All budget categories entered in Field 18 should **align with all budget documents**, such the Consolidated Budget Form

*The actual approved Period of Performance will be included in the award document





SF-424 Instructions | Fields 20- 21

○ Required ○ Not Required

Indicate whether your entity is delinquent on any federal debt. If yes, an explanation must be provided in the space provided

In the NGP, applicants will only be able to provide a written explanation, *not* upload additional attachments

*** 20 Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

Yes No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

**** I AGREE**

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name:

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Suffix:

* Title:

* Telephone Number: Fax Number:

* Email:

* Signature of Authorized Representative: * Date Signed:

The **AOR** must fill out the section titled "**Authorized Representative**" on the form. The **AOR** is the individual who will submit the application on behalf of the Applicant.

Enter the first name, last name, title, telephone number, and email address of the AOR.

Note that for any questions regarding the application, NTIA will contact the AOR. ONLY the AOR will be able to submit the application in the NGP



LOBBYING STANDARD FORMS

CD-511 (Certificate Regarding Lobby) - REQUIRED



CD-511 (REV 1-05)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	
CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING			
<p>Applicants should also review the instructions for certification included in the regulations before completing this form. Signature on this form provides for compliance with certification requirements under 15 CFR Part 28, 'New Restrictions on Lobbying.' The certifications shall be treated as a material representation of fact upon which reliance will be placed when the Department of Commerce determines to award the covered transaction, grant, or cooperative agreement.</p>			
<p>LOBBYING</p> <p>As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 15 CFR Part 28, for persons entering into a grant, cooperative agreement or contract over \$100,000 or a loan or loan guarantee over \$150,000 as defined at 15 CFR Part 28, Sections 28.105 and 28.110, the applicant certifies that to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:</p> <p>(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.</p> <p>(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, 'Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying,' in accordance with its instructions.</p> <p>(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.</p> <p>This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure occurring on or before October 23, 1996, and of not less than \$11,000 and not more than \$110,000 for each such failure occurring after October 23, 1996.</p>		<p>Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance</p> <p>The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:</p> <p>In any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, 'Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying,' in accordance with its instructions.</p> <p>Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure occurring on or before October 23, 1996, and of not less than \$11,000 and not more than \$110,000 for each such failure occurring after October 23, 1996.</p>	
<p>As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above applicable certification.</p>			
<p>* NAME OF APPLICANT <input type="text"/></p>			
<p>* AWARD NUMBER <input type="text"/></p>		<p>* PROJECT NAME <input type="text"/></p>	
<p>Prefix: <input type="text"/> * First Name: <input type="text"/> Middle Name: <input type="text"/></p>			
<p>* Last Name: <input type="text"/> Suffix: <input type="text"/></p>			
<p>* Title: <input type="text"/></p>			
<p>* SIGNATURE: <input type="text"/></p>		<p>* DATE: <input type="text"/></p>	
<p>Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.</p>		<p>Completed by Grants.gov upon submission.</p>	

Who must complete this form?

- All applicants **MUST** complete this form.
- It **MUST** be signed by the Authorized Representative listed on the SF-424.

What is this form used for?

- The CD-511 is a form that applicants sign to certify compliance with the requirements and restrictions on lobbying found in [15 CFR Part 28](#).

Where do I find this form?

- The CD-511 form can be found on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or can be found [here](#).



SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) - OPTIONAL



DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES
 Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352 OMB Number: 4040-0013
 Expiration Date: 02/28/2025

1. * Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	2. * Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	3. * Report Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prime <input type="checkbox"/> Subawardee * Name: [Redacted] * Street 1: [Redacted] Street 2: [Redacted] * City: [Redacted] State: [Redacted] Zip: [Redacted] Congressional District, if known: [Redacted]		
5. If Reporting Entity in No.4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime: [Redacted]		
6. * Federal Department/Agency: [Redacted]		7. * Federal Program Name/Description: [Redacted] CFDA Number, if applicable: [Redacted]
8. Federal Action Number, if known: [Redacted]		9. Award Amount, if known: \$ [Redacted]
10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant: Prefix: [Redacted] * First Name: [Redacted] Middle Name: [Redacted] * Last Name: [Redacted] Suffix: [Redacted] * Street 1: [Redacted] Street 2: [Redacted] * City: [Redacted] State: [Redacted] Zip: [Redacted]		
b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a) Prefix: [Redacted] * First Name: [Redacted] Middle Name: [Redacted] * Last Name: [Redacted] Suffix: [Redacted] * Street 1: [Redacted] Street 2: [Redacted] * City: [Redacted] State: [Redacted] Zip: [Redacted]		
11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.		
* Signature: Completed on submission to Grants.gov * Name: Prefix: [Redacted] * First Name: [Redacted] Middle Name: [Redacted] * Last Name: [Redacted] Suffix: [Redacted] Title: [Redacted] Telephone No.: [Redacted] Date: Completed on submission to Grants.gov		
Federal Use Only: [Redacted]		

Who must complete this form?

- If an applicant has engaged in lobbying activities as described in 2 C.F.R. 200.450, they must complete this form.
- On April 22, 2024, OMB published updates to 2 CFR 200 in the Federal Register at [89 FR 30046](#). These updated regulations will apply to all awards under the Competitive Grant Program. The Chief Financial Officer's Council has published an [unofficial redline](#) of the changes, available here

What is this form used for?

- The SF-LLL collects information related to the applicant's lobby activities.

Where do I find this form?

- The SF-LLL form can be found on grants.gov or can be found [here](#).



NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT

Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)



A NICRA is a legal document between the federal government and recipient that formalizes an indirect cost rate which recipients can use in their budgets. Once a recipient obtains a NICRA, that rate will apply in all subsequent federal grants until renewed.

REMINDERS

- ✓ Applicants that wish to charge indirect costs and who do not have a NICRA may use the **de minimis rate of 15%** of Modified Total Direct Costs, as described in 2 CFR 200.414(f). **Calculation of the de minimis rate has changed per the recent OMB updates** to 2 CFR 200, at [89 FR 30046](#).
- ✓ Applicants wishing to develop a NICRA may do so. In most cases, the NICRA must be approved by the entity's cognizant agency. There is **an exception for State or Local Governments and Indian Tribes who received \$35 million or less during their fiscal year - these entities may prepare a NICRA like usual, but do not need to submit it for approval.** They must retain it on file for review upon request by the awarding agency.
- ✓ Only applicants with **an existing NICRA** are required to submit their letter with their application.



NICRA- Continued



Additional NICRA reminders for applicants include:

REMINDERS

- ✓ In all cases, combined direct and indirect administrative costs **must stay below the statutory limit, regardless of an entity's NICRA or de minimis rate**
- ✓ For additional information, please see Appendix III- VII of 2 CFR 200. Note that these appendices were recently updated by OMB at [89 FR 30046](#); the text at [ecfr.gov](#) is outdated.
- ✓ On April 22, 2024, OMB published updates to 2 CFR 200 in the Federal Register at [89 FR 30046](#). These updated regulations **will apply to all awards under the DE Competitive grant program and include several changes to calculation of the de minimis rate.**



Common NICRA Questions



Some common questions NICRA include:

- **What are indirect costs?**
 - Indirect costs (salaries, fringe benefits, rent, utilities, supplies, etc.) are not charged directly to the federal award but are instead allocated, equitably to the organization's/recipient's activities, typically through a NICRA. **All direct and indirect administrative costs must remain under the statutory cap of 10%**, regardless of an entity's NICRA rate.
- **How can I obtain a NICRA?**
 - Applicants should obtain a NICRA from the federal agency that they have received the most funding from, which is considered the entity's "**cognizant agency**." If the recipient determines that the Department of Commerce (DOC) is their cognizant agency, they should reach out to gmdaudit@nist.gov to begin the process of obtaining for a NICRA. If an applicant is unsure how to determine their cognizant agency, they should refer the OMB published updates to 2 CFR 200 in the Federal Register at [89 FR 30046](#) and Appendices III-VII in 2 C.F.R. 200.
- **How long does the process of obtaining a NICRA usually take?**
 - The process of obtaining a NICRA can take up to 180 days.
- **Once I obtain a NICRA, where do I submit it?**
 - NICRA letters should be uploaded to the NGP once obtained.

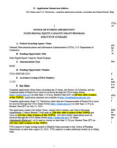


ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional Resources



To ensure a fair, open, and transparent application process and maintain the integrity of our program, our biggest priority is to make sure that every potential applicant has access to the same information. Therefore, NTIA cannot provide one-on-one support to applicants during the application window or review process to maintain a fair process. Be sure to check the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program webpage for additional information. We appreciate your interest and wish you luck with your application. Please access the following resources for additional guidance and information:



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Reference Document

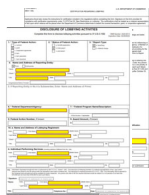
Description of the specific program and all its requirements



DE Competitive Application Guidance

Guidance

Provides guidance on how to fill out an application to a specific program, including screenshots and step-by-step instructions



Standard Forms

Documents

[CD-511](#), Certificate Regarding Lobbying
[SF-LLL](#), Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
[SF- 424](#), Application for Federal Assistance



Websites

Website with additional resources

[Broadband USA](#), [Internet for All](#)
[Digital Equity Act – Competitive Grant Program Website](#)
[Grants.gov](#)



NTIA Grants Portal

NGP

The SF-424 Application will be inputted directly into the NGP.



Digital Equity Inbox

Digitalequity@ntia.gov

Email questions related to the Competitive Grant Program to this inbox. We may not be able to answer individual questions but will do our best to point you in the right direction, and in the meantime make sure you attend our webinars if you want more information.



WHAT'S NEXT?

What's Next? | *Scheduled Information Sessions*



Application Webinar Part 2

What Topics will be Covered?

- SAM.gov
- Partnerships
- Letters of Commitment

What will we be Covering?

- SAM.gov registration
- Navigating the NGP
- Partnership and Letter of Commitment Needs



Application Webinar Part 3

What Topics will be Covered?

- Project Narrative
- Executive Summary
- Project(s) Description Form

What will we be Covering?

- Details to include in the project narrative
- Breakdown of the executive summary
- Review of the Project(s) Description Form



Application Webinar Part 4

What Topics will be Covered?

- Evaluation Strategy
- Risk mitigation
- Other required plans

What will we be Covering?

- Details to include for each plan
- How to submit the plans



Application Webinar Part 5

What Topics will be Covered?

- Related Costs
- Consolidated Budget Form

What will we be Covering?

- Review of Consolidated Budget Form
- Review of NICRA
- Review of Budget Caps



QUESTIONS?
