

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program - Can You Connect?

October 2010

The Federal Stimulus allocates \$4.7 billion through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) to provide and improve broadband to underserved communities, including public safety agencies, higher education institutions, and other community support organizations. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will distribute at least one grant in every state by December 31, 2010. The federally funded share of any project may not exceed 80%, unless an applicant petitions NTIA for a waiver and demonstrates financial need.

Grants will be based on

- whether an application will increase the affordability of service, broadband speed, and enhance healthcare and education services to the greatest population of users in the area
- whether the applicant is a socially and economically disadvantaged small business, as defined in the Small Business Act

States, political, and non-profit organizations seeking a portion of the \$4.7 billion subsidy, must meet a host of requirements.

What are the requirements?

- a detailed explanation of how any amount received will be used to carry out the purposes of BTOP in an efficient and expeditious manner, including a showing that the project would not have been implemented during the grant period without federal grant assistance
- a demonstration that the applicant is capable of carrying out the project in a competent manner in compliance with all applicable laws
- a demonstration that the applicant will appropriate 20%, from non-federal sources, to fund the project
- the source and amount of any other federal or state funding received or applied for and
- such assurances and procedures as may be required to ensure that grant funds are used in an appropriate manner

NTIA may create additional, competitive grants to

- acquire equipment, instrumentation, networking capability, hardware and software, digital network technology, and infrastructure for broadband services
- construct and deploy broadband service related infrastructure
- ensure access to broadband service by community anchor institutions
- facilitate access to broadband service by low-income, unemployed, aged and otherwise vulnerable populations in order to provide educational and employment opportunities
- construct and deploy broadband facilities that improve public safety communications services