NEW AMERICA
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Application Guide for Public Computer Center Funding from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)

This guide has been prepared by the New America Foundation's Open Technology Initiative as a reference guide for applicants for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). In addition to general information about the application process and eligibility requirements outlined in the July 1, 2009 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), this guide breaks down the application into categories of responsibility and a sample timeline. While not intended as a replacement for the NOFA itself, this guide is a roadmap for applying for funds under the Public Computer Center category of the NOFA and an overview of what will be required for the application.

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General Information

The July 1, 2009 NOFA set aside a maximum of $50 million for Public Computer Centers. The Public Computer Center category will fund projects that expand public access to broadband service and enhance broadband capacity at institutions that allow public access to computing centers, such as community colleges and public libraries. [NOFA ¶253 – 256] Applicants who are applying for multiple funding categories need to submit multiple applications but should reference the other applications and describe the synergies of the projects in each of the applications. [BTOP/BIP Frequently Asked Questions section I. D. 2.]

- Grantees for BTOP funds under the adoption category are required to show how such funding serves the stated purposes of:
  1. Providing broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support to community anchor institutions (*e.g.*, schools, libraries, and healthcare providers, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations), or organizations and agencies serving vulnerable populations (*e.g.*, low-income, unemployed, aged), or job-creating strategic facilities located in state- or federally-designated economic development areas;
  2. Improving access to, and use of, broadband service by public safety agencies; and
  3. Stimulating the demand for broadband, economic growth, and job creation. [NOFA ¶787 – 795]

- Applicants will need to meet at least one of the five BTOP statutory purposes which include stimulating demand for broadband and providing broadband awareness, and training; providing broadband access to consumers in unserved areas; providing access to consumers in underserved areas; and improving access and use of broadband by public safety agencies. Applicants seeking funding for public computer centers are required to meet the first requirement; however *meeting additional requirements will improve the competiveness of your application.*

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the BTOP priorities and point system, beginning at ¶1399 of the NOFA, as part of the process of developing the project and application. Each application will be scored using this point structure and will be judged on its individual merits and not against other applications. *Further, during step two of the BTOP application process, the Governor's office of each state will receive a list of the applications under consideration to prioritize applications.* Thus, it is important for applicants to also discuss their project with the Governor's office. [NOFA ¶315 – 325]

- Awardees under BTOP will be required to provide matching funds of at least 20 percent toward the total eligible project cost. NTIA will provide up to 80 percent of total eligible project costs, unless the applicant petitions the Assistant Secretary for a waiver of the matching requirement and that waiver is granted by the Assistant Secretary based on the applicant's demonstration of financial need. *In-kind contributions, including third party in-kind contributions, are non-cash donations to a project that may count toward satisfying the non-federal matching requirement of a project's total budget.* [NOFA ¶709 – 731] Public Computer Center projects do not need to demonstrate that the project is in an unserved or underserved area but must show that they serve vulnerable population groups where broadband technology has traditionally been underutilized. [BTOP/BIP Frequently Asked Questions section III. A. 2.]

- While applicants for public computer center program funding are not required to provide census block level data to satisfy the underserved eligibility requirement, applicants are encouraged to do a thorough market analysis or develop specific methodologies necessary to quantify details of the adoption program's benefits, such as the number of subscribers and use of facilities, as well as describe the methodology used to estimate the numbers. [*See* NTIA Grant Guidelines for the Recovery Act Broad Band Opportunities Program, pp. 98 – 99]
- Funding can only be used for eligible costs which include acquiring broadband related equipment, constructing or acquiring new facilities, developing training programs or content, facilitating access to broadband services, including, but not limited to, making public computer centers accessible to the disabled, and undertaking other projects consistent with the NOFA at the discretion of the Assistant Secretary. [NOFA ¶796 – 806]
- Public housing agencies, as government entities, are eligible to apply for funding. [BTOP/BIP Frequently Asked Questions section III. B. 2.]
- A project is eligible only if the application demonstrates that the project can be substantially completed (67%) within two years of the date of issuance of the grant, and finished within three years of the date of the award. [NOFA ¶598 – 603]
- The grant recipient should use program income generated during the grant period to further eligible project objectives. [NOFA ¶824 – 840]
- Electronic applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. ET on August 14, 2009 and paper submissions must be postmarked no later than August 14, 2009, or hand-delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on August, 14, 2009. [NOFA ¶1278 – 1288]

Additional Resources
- Broadband USA: http://www.broadbandusa.gov
- Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Broadband Initiatives Program and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program: http://broadbandusa.sc.egov.usda.gov/files/BB%20NOFA%20FINAL%2007092009.pdf.
- Public Computer Center application package: http://broadbandusa.sc.egov.usda.gov/forms/PCC/Public%20Computer%20Centers%20Application%20Package.zip.
- Grant Guidelines for the Recovery Act Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP): http://broadbandusa.sc.egov.usda.gov/files/BTOP%20Grant%20Guidelines%20v1%200%20(July%2010).pdf.

Application Requirements

Required for Step One of the Application [NOFA ¶1074 – 1130]
- General Information
    - Descriptive Title for the Project
    - Congressional District affected by the project
    - Dollar amount of funding request
- Verification that the applicant meets eligibility factors
- Executive summary of the project
- Description of Project Purpose

- Description of any collaboration with Recovery Act or other state or federal development programs that leverage the impact of the proposed project
- Description of how the program would enhance service for health care delivery, education, or children
- Evidence of collaboration with any SDB
- The capacity of the proposed computer center(s) and the populations to be served including possible membership fees and restrictions
- Summary of the viability of the project including technology to be used, qualifications of management team, partnerships, and a project timeline
- Proposed budget and sustainability information
- Competed environmental checklist and applicable certifications
- Project must meet 67% of milestones within 2 years of award date and be fully completed within 3 years.

Required Documentation [as outlined in the application]

Records
- Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN)
- Organizational DUNS (available at www.dunandbradstreet.com or 1-866-705-5711)
- CCR (Applicant must register in the CCR system at http://www.ccr.gov/StartRegistration.aspx if not already registered)
- Funding Opportunity Number: 0660-ZA28 [Grant Guidelines for the Recovery Act Broad Band Opportunities Program p. 88]
- Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 11.577. [Grant Guidelines for the Recovery Act Broad Band Opportunities Program p. 88]
- CFDA Title
- Application ID for Multiple Submissions for Identified Service Areas (if applicable)
- Management Resumes (one-page per resume, half-page per biographical summaries)
- List of key partners
- Half-page Contracting and/or Partnering with Disadvantaged Businesses description (if applicable)
- Historical Financial Statements (for the last two years - start-up firms should provide the most recent financial statements)
  - Income Statement;
  - Balance Sheet; and
  - Statement of Cash Flows

Written Documents
- Big Picture
  - 100-character Project Title
  - 500-character Project Description
  - Two-page Executive Summary
  - Two-page description of Project Purpose
  - One-Page description of public availability including target population, fees (if applicable), and how charges are consistent with the public interest (if applicable)
- Project Details

- o Half-page description of restrictions of use
- o One-page description of accessibility for the disabled
- o One-page on demographic category or categories the program will serve
- o Half-page description of peripherals and/or broadband equipment provided for each workstation
- o Half-page description of software provided for each workstation
- o Two-page description primary training and education programs
- o Two-page description of overall technology plan (for Computer Center projects)
- Organizational and Budget Documents
  - o One-page organizational Readiness
  - o Two-page description of project timeline and challenges
  - o Two-page budget narrative
  - o One-page description of budget reasonableness
  - o One-Page description of how the project will enable centers to sustain themselves

<u>Other Documents</u>
- Demonstration of Financial Need (why the project would not have been implemented during the grant period "but for" federal grant assistance)
- Locations of the Computer Centers
- Metrics chart of Center Capacity
- Description of size and scope of target audience
- Organization chart
- Licenses and regulatory approvals (if applicable)
- Legal Opinion
- Description of financial need
- Description of matching funds, or a letter clearly defining the need for a waiver for matching funds
- Unjust Enrichment statement
- Disclosure of Federal and/or State Funding Sources
- Legal justification for Buy American Requirement waiver (if applicable)

Project Team and Sample Timeline

Completing the application requires a diverse set of skills. Below are individuals your grantwriting and development team should include along with a corresponding list of items in the application they will be responsible for.

- **Writer** who can tell the story of your proposed project in a concise and compelling manner. Application items: 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 19, 22, *32*, *33*, 36.
- **Administrator** who can compile the required documentation, including licenses, contracts, and organizational charts. Application items: 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 34, 35, *37*, 38, 39, 40, 41 (environmental), 42, 46.
- **Evaluation Specialist** who understands the metrics for justifying the needs of target population and can evaluate the progress of the project. Application items: 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, *36*.

- **System Administrator** who understands the technological needs of the center. Application items: 16, 20, 21, 23.
- **Financial Officer** who can prepare budgets and assist with the development of the business model. Application items: 5, 9, *32*, *33*, 34, *36*, *37*.

Some items are listed under multiple team roles because they will require collaboration (noted with italics). In addition, your proposal will need to be reviewed by an attorney (item 36) who should also advise on item 35 about licenses and contracts. Item 46 in the application is about environmental impacts, which an administrator could answer, but may require assistance from a specialist.

Sample Timeline
The following represents a best guess estimate of the amount of time it will take an individual to complete certain components of the application. Applicants should adjust accordingly based on the size and expertise of their team. The timeline assumes a certain level of organizational readiness and that certain data already exists with the applicant group. Applicants developing Public Computer Centers without having identified specific locations, target populations, and project goals, while not discouraged from applying, should make sure they can compile the data necessary to finish the application on time.

One important consideration for all applicants is to leave sufficient time to submit the application on-line. Applicants should strongly consider completing the application two-days prior to the August 14th deadline to avoid any technical issues related to application servers or your own Internet connection. We also recommend that the team take time to familiarize themselves with the NOFA and NTIA Grant Guidelines to ensure that the grant team has a thorough understanding what is required in the application.

Before beginning the application process, we encourage you take the following preliminary steps:
- Form a Steering Committee
- Form a Project Team
- Outline a Responsibility Breakdown of the Application
- Form a Grantwriting Team
- Create a Project Management Structure

Hrs.	Writer	Financial Officer	Project Metrics / Community Engagement	Administrator	Systems Administrator	Additional Actions
5	Big picture documents (20 hrs.)	Outline budget details (15 hrs.)	Create project metrics (5 hrs.)	Required id. numbers (5 hrs.)	Determine technological needs (20 hrs.)	Inform elected officials and continue community engagement (ongoing)
10				2yr. historical data (5 hrs.)		
15				Resumes and bios (5hrs.)		
20				Identify contracts needed (5 hrs.)		
25	Project detail documents 25 hrs.)	Create computer center model (10-20 hrs.)		Formalize partnerships (15 hrs.)		
30						
35						
40		Develop sustainability model (10 hrs.)				
45						
50	Organizational and budget documents (20 hrs.)			Secure legal opinion (10-20 hrs.)		
55						
60						
65						
70	Review application and integrate feedback (40-50 hrs.)					
75						
80						
85						
90						
95						
100						
105						
110						
115	Final corrections and changes (10 hrs.)					
120						
125	Submit application (20 hrs.)					
130						
135						
140						