

Broadband Funding Sources

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

Community Connect Grants - USDA Rural Utility Service

Eligibility

The following entities are eligible for funding:

- Incorporated Organizations
- Indian Tribes or Tribal Organizations, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b(b) and (c).
- State or local units of government, or
- Cooperative, private corporations or limited liability companies, organized on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis

For questions about the Community Connect Grant Program, contact program staff, Thera Swersky or Steven Levine at community.connect@wdc.usda.gov. Broadband Division, Telecommunications Program.

(202) 690-4673

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp_commconnect.html

Community Facility Grants

Community Programs provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants. Eligibility – Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. In addition, applicants must have the legal authority necessary for construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed facility and also be unable to obtain needed funds from commercial sources at reasonable rates and terms.

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-CF_Grants.html

Distance Learning & Telemedicine (DTL)

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program (DLT) is designed specifically to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America. Through loans, grants and loan/grant combinations, advanced telecommunications technologies provide enhanced learning and health care opportunities for rural residents. Eligibility – Entities providing education and medical care via telecommunications including corporations or partnerships, Indian tribes or tribal organizations, state or local units of government, consortia, and private for-profit or not-for profit corporations. Individuals are not eligible. http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_DLT.html

Farm Bill Broadband Program

This program is designed to provide loans for funding, on a technology neutral basis, for the costs of construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment to provide broadband service to eligible rural communities. Eligibility – Not less than 25 percent of the households in the proposed service territory is offered broadband service by not more than one incumbent service provider. Broadband service is not provided in any part of the service territory by three or more incumbent service providers.

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp_farmbill.html

Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program - USDA Rural Utility Service

The Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program makes Long-term direct and guaranteed loans to qualified organizations for the purpose of financing the improvement, expansion, construction, acquisition, and operation of telephone lines, facilities, or systems to furnish and improve Telecommunications service in rural areas. All facilities financed must be capable of supporting broadband services.

Eligibility:

RUS makes Loans to:

- Entities providing, or who may hereafter provide, telephone service in rural areas
- Public bodies providing telephone service in rural areas as of October 28, 1949
- Cooperative, nonprofit, limited dividend or mutual associations
- RUS does not make loans to individuals.

http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp_infrastructure.html

U.S. Rural Infrastructure Opportunity Fund

The Rural Infrastructure Opportunity Fund is a collaborative effort between USDA, CoBank and Capitol Peak Asset Management. Capitol Peak Asset Management (CPAM) will manage the fund's operation and recruit other investors. CoBank has pledged up to \$10 billion to make loans in conjunction with the fund. USDA is helping to identify and prioritize projects. Eligible projects – broadband expansion, community facilities, water and waste systems, energy projects, local and regional food systems and other rural infrastructure needs. While USDA may help identify projects, projects need not be vetted by USDA to secure a loan. The fund was launched in July 2014 and is currently accepting applications. Project funding inquiries may be submitted at any time as the program is designed to operate as a sustainable investment platform. Interested parties can apply through CPAM at <http://www.capitol-peak.com> (follow the contact link).

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2014/07/0158.xml>

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USDA Rural Development-UTP Telecommunications Program Website:
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RUStelecomprograms.html>

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Connect America Fund

The FCC has adopted reforms of its Universal Service Fund (USF) and Intercarrier Compensation (ICC) systems to accelerate broadband build-out. This funding program is directed at telecommunications carriers and reflects the new focus of the FCC on broadband rather than basic voice service.

This is a new emerging set of programs that should be monitored for funding opportunities. <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/connecting-america>

ConnectED

In June 2013, President Obama announced the ConnectED initiative where within five years, connect 99 percent of America's students to the digital age through next-generation broadband and high-speed wireless in their schools and libraries. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and companies like Apple, Microsoft, Sprint, and Verizon are already providing their support, collectively pledging to connect more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students by the end of 2015.

ConnectED will also provide better broadband access for students in rural areas, by expanding successful efforts to connect parts of the country that typically have trouble attracting investment in broadband infrastructure. In early 2014, private-sector companies committed more than \$750 million to deliver cutting-edge technologies to classrooms. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/k-12/connected>

Schools and Libraries Universal Service Program (“E-Rate”)

E-rate is program that makes telecommunications and information services more affordable for schools and libraries in America. Congress mandated in 1996 that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) use the federal Universal Service Fund (USF) to provide discounted eligible telecommunications, Internet access, and internal connections to eligible schools and libraries. In 2014 the FCC announced that an additional \$2 billion (for a total of 4.4 billion) would be invested in E-rate programs for the following two-years.

<http://www.fcc.gov/guides/universal-service-program-schools-and-libraries>

Healthcare Connect Fund

The Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program provides support for broadband connectivity to eligible health care providers (HCPs) and encourages the formation of state and regional broadband networks. Under the HCF Program, eligible HCPs can apply as individual HCPs or as part of a consortium. Individual HCPs and consortium applicants will be able to receive a 65 percent discount on all eligible services and equipment. Consortium applicants will also be able to receive this discount on HCP-constructed and owned network facilities. The FCC Telecommunications Program (Primary Program) will operate alongside the new HCF but migration will probably occur to the HCF. This source replaces the FCC Internet Access Program. More information about HCF is available at

<http://www.usac.org/rhc/healthcare-connect/default.aspx>

Mobility Fund and Tribal Mobility Fund

The FCC USF/ICC Transformation Order recognized the growing importance of mobile broadband and set an independent universal service objective. The order created the Mobile Fund and the Tribal Mobility Fund. This resource was created to provide support for mobile broadband networks in areas lacking 3rd generation (3G) and 4th generation (4G) wireless broadband services.

On Tribal lands, eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) that provide service on these lands, have access to spectrum capable of 3G or better, and are financially capable of providing service are eligible to participate in spectrum auctions. Provisions have also been provided for a tribally-owned or controlled entity that is not yet an ETC to participate in an auction as long as that entity has a pending ETC designation application using a short-form application in time to meet a set deadline. It is possible for non-tribal owned and tribal owned companies to apply for subsidies. Non-tribal

owned companies have to be designated as an ETC for the areas they wish to serve.
<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/mobility-fund> and Tribal Mobility Fund Phase 1 Eligible Areas (as of February 2014)

<http://www.fcc.gov/maps/tribal-mobility-fund-phase-1-eligible-areas>

Universal Service Reform Mobility Fund

Rulemaking 10-208 / Citizen's Summary

Millions of Americans live in communities where current-generation mobile service is unavailable, and millions more work in or travel through such areas. To accelerate our nation's ongoing effort to close this mobility gap in a fiscally responsible manner, this rulemaking seeks comment on using reserves accumulated in the Universal Service Fund (USF) to create a new Mobility Fund.

The purpose of the Mobility Fund is to significantly improve coverage of current-generation or better mobile voice and Internet service for consumers in areas where such coverage is currently missing, and to do so by supporting private investment. The Mobility Fund would use market mechanisms – specifically, a reverse auction – to make one-time support available to service providers to cost-effectively extend mobile coverage in specified unserved areas.

<https://www.fcc.gov/rulemaking/10-208>

NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION (NTIA)

FirstNet

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 created the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), an independent authority within the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). Congress charged FirstNet to take "all actions necessary" to build, deploy, and operate the network, in consultation with Federal, state, tribal, and local public policy entities. The Act provides \$7 billion in funding towards deployment of this network, as well as \$135 million for a new State and Local Implementation Grant Program administered by NTIA to support State, regional, tribal and local jurisdictions' efforts to plan and work with FirstNet to ensure the network meets their wireless public safety communications needs. <http://www.firstnet.gov> and <http://www.firstnetinoregon.org>

Oregon Contact:

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

DHS Announces Grant Programs

WASHINGTON—Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson today announced the release of Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Notices of Funding Opportunity for nine DHS preparedness grant programs totaling more than \$1.6 billion. The grant programs provide funding to state, local, tribal and territorial governments, as well as transportation authorities, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector, to improve the nation's readiness in preventing, protecting against, responding to, recovering from and mitigating terrorist attacks, major disasters and other emergencies.

<http://www.dhs.gov/news/2015/04/02/dhs-announces-grant-guidance-fiscal-year-fy-2015-preparedness-grants>

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

ConnectHome is a new initiative with communities, the private sector, and federal government to expand high speed broadband to more families across the country. The pilot program is launching in twenty-seven cities and one tribal nation and will initially reach over 275,000 low-income households – and nearly 200,000 children – with the support they need to access the Internet at home. Internet Service Providers, non-profits and the private sector will offer broadband access, technical training, digital literacy programs, and devices for residents in assisted housing units.

<http://connecthome.hud.gov/>

STATE OF OREGON

Oregon Special Public Works Fund (SPWF)

The Oregon Business Development Department administers the Special Public Works Fund (SPWF) which provides funds (primarily loans) for publically owned facilities that support economic and community development in Oregon. Public agencies that are eligible to apply for funding are cities, counties, county service districts (organized under ORS Chapter 451), tribal councils, ports, districts as defined in ORS 198.010, and airport districts as defined in ORS 838). Facilities and infrastructure projects that are eligible for funding include telecommunications facilities, however, for telecommunications projects the applicant must establish that the proposed telecommunications system project is necessary and would not otherwise be provided by a for-profit entity within a reasonable time and for a reasonable cost. More information on SPWF may be found at <http://www.oinfrastructure.org/Infrastructure-Programs/SPWF/>

OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

BroadbandUSA Initiative –

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

BroadbandUSA is a new initiative to help communities make sure their citizens have the broadband capacity they need to advance economic development, education, health care, and public safety. BroadbandUSA will promote broadband deployment and adoption by using everything from toolkits and training programs, to webinars and workshops, to provide technical assistance, funding leads and basic guidance to communities as they grow their broadband capacity and use. It will also coordinate among federal agencies to promote broadband deployment and adoption.

<http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/>

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

“BroadbandUSA: Guide to Federal Funding of Broadband Projects,” September 2015.

http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/files/broadband_fed_funding_guide.pdf .

NTIA Data Central

Data Central is home to NTIA data and analysis on computer and Internet use in the United States. NTIA first commissioned the U.S. Census Bureau to collect data on Americans’ use of computers in November 1994. It enables users to select from dozens of metrics tracked over time, as well as a number of demographic characteristics, and charts the requested data.

<https://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/data-central>

NTIA Data Explorer 2.0

On November 1, 2016, NTIA launched Data Explorer 2.0, an online data processing tool. This enhanced data management and visualization product makes public data easier to find, explore and understand. Stakeholders from local, state, and tribal website manipulate and utilize the survey data governments, industry and non-profits can better visualize and use large sampled data (approximately 53,000 households representing more than 120,000 people) by state, and demographic categories like age, race, income, and education.

<https://www.ntia.doc.gov/blog/2016/mapping-computer-and-internet-use-state-introducing-data-explorer-20>

Access and Inclusion in the Digital Age: A Resource Guide for Local Governments

This is a resource guide designed to support U.S. communities of all sizes and geographies in advancing their goals for high-speed Internet access and digital inclusion. The resource guide represents an innovative model for intercity collaboration and peer learning. While federal agencies, nonprofits, foundations, and private interests have produced much information on digital inclusion, a resource guide on this subject produced by a consortium of city leaders for the benefit of cities nationwide is

unprecedented. The perspectives of the authors and the target audience are completely in alignment, which allows for greater sensitivity to the financial, social, and political realities that will impact communities seeking to launch new initiatives.

http://nationalresourcenetwork.org/en/Document/306284/Access_and_Inclusion_in_the_Digital_Age_A_Resource_Guide_for_Local_Governments

Oregon Broadband Advisory Council

The mission of the council is to encourage coordination and collaboration between organizations and economic sectors to leverage the development and utilization of broadband for education, workforce development and telehealth, and to promote broadband utilization by citizens and communities.

www.broadband-oregon.org

Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference

The conference draws attendees from all regions of the state to share ideas, experiences and knowledge about telecommunications.

The 2015 conference presenters and attendees will explore aspects of Broadband as it comes of age twenty years after the commercialization of the Internet. Program topics will include cyber-security, smart communities, challenge of infrastructure, Internet and Broadband Public Policy, Broadband enabled applications, and the status of Broadband in Oregon.

www.oregonconnections.info

Broadband Opportunity Council

President Obama on March 23, 2015 signed a [Presidential Memorandum](#) creating the Broadband Opportunity Council (BOC) and appointing the [Commerce](#) and Agriculture Departments as co-chairs. The Broadband Opportunity Council includes 25 federal agencies and departments that will engage with industry and other stakeholders to understand ways the Executive Branch can better support the needs of communities seeking broadband investment. It will also help identify regulatory barriers unduly impeding broadband deployment, adoption or competition, and recommend steps to remove such barriers.

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/broadband-opportunity-council>

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