

**Nebraska Broadband Office (NBO)**  
**Nebraska Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (NBEAD) Program**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**Version 1 – November 25, 2024**

**1. What is the difference between an Organizational Application (OA) and a Project Application (PA)? Do we have to submit both?**

Yes, if your organization wants to be considered for NBEAD funding, you must submit both an OA and a PA. NBO has split NBEAD applications into two pieces: an OA and a PA. The OA addresses components of the application specific to the applicant organization: contact and legal information, ownership, capacity, experience with other federal or state funding; and the required certifications and attestations. Each applicant will submit one OA, regardless of the number of Defined Project Areas (DPAs) in which the organization is interested.

Applicants **must** submit an OA targeting at least one DPA to participate in the NBEAD program.

PAs will address details specific to a planned project in a single DPA. PAs will include plans concerning the design and construction of the planned project, outreach efforts, labor and workforce, compliance with laws, and budget. One PA must be submitted for each DPA in which an applicant is interested.

**2. If an organization does not submit an OA, can they still submit a PA for NBEAD funding?**

No. OAs are required for NBEAD participation, so if an organization does not submit an OA, they will not be eligible to submit a PA. NBO will screen and score OAs and publish a list of Approved Applicants. PAs will only be accepted from organizations on the list of Approved Applicants.

**3. Can we apply for funding for multiple DPA's?**

Yes, an organization may apply for multiple DPAs. A separate PA must be submitted for each of those DPAs.

**4. Do we have to submit a separate PA for each DPA?**

Yes. Each PA should address a single DPA. If an organization is interested in applying for funding for multiple DPAs, they will need to submit multiple applications.

**5. Can we partner with another organization on a project targeting a single DPA?**

Yes. You may partner with one or more organizations to submit an application for a single DPA. Please note that one of the organizations will need to serve as the Subgrantee for the project, and will be responsible for reporting to NBO, submitting reimbursement requests, and paying the other partners.

**6. What if we are just starting as an internet service provider (ISP) in Nebraska, or have only been in business a short time? Can we apply for NBEAD funding?**

Yes, new or young organizations may apply for NBEAD funding. The RFA details information alternatives for new organizations as applicable. Please be aware that there is a short window in which NBO will accept questions on the OAs and another short window for questions on the PAs, so if anything is unclear, do not hesitate to submit your question.

**7. What kinds of organizations are eligible to apply for NBEAD funding?**

The following organizations are eligible to apply for NBEAD funding:

- Internet service providers
- Cable service companies
- Telephone service providers
- Tribal governments or other entities
- Women-owned business enterprises
- Minority-owned business enterprises
- Cooperatives
- Nonprofit organizations
- Public-private partnerships
- Private companies
- Public or private utilities
- Public utility districts
- Local governments, including any unit, subdivision, authority, or consortium of local or tribal governments
- Incorporated businesses or partnerships
- Limited liability companies

**8. What are the NBEAD funding priorities?**

The BEAD legislation requires prioritization of unserved Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs), then underserved BSLs, and then Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs). Projects that target end-to-end fiber architecture or fiber to the premises (FTTP) must be prioritized over other technologies. Projects that include matching funds of greater than 25% will receive additional points in the evaluation of applications. NBEAD applications that target high poverty areas and persistent poverty counties are also of higher priority.

**9. What is the difference between a Priority Project and an Other Project?**

A Priority Project targets complete coverage of the DPA with end-to-end fiber architecture. An Other Project includes other technologies such as licensed fixed wireless or low-earth orbit satellite, or a combination of any two or more technologies. Applications that target Priority Projects will be scored before those that target an Other Project for the same DPA. Additional information about scoring is included in the RFA.

**10. What is Reliable Broadband Service?**

Reliable Broadband Service (RBS) is defined as broadband service that is accessible to a location via:

- a. Fiber-optic technology (Broadband Data Collection [BDC] technology code 50)
- b. Cable modem/hybrid fiber-coaxial (HFC) technology (technology code 40)
- c. Digital subscriber line (DSL) technology (technology code 10)
- d. Terrestrial fixed wireless technology utilizing entirely licensed spectrum (includes spectrum licensed by rule) or using a hybrid of licensed and unlicensed spectrum (technology codes 71 and 72).

**11. Which technologies are prioritized under NBEAD?**

Under NBEAD, technologies are prioritized in the following order:

- a. RBS – Priority Project: a project that will provision service via end-to-end fiber-optic facilities to each end-user premises.
- b. RBS – Qualifying Broadband: a project that will provision service via:
  - i. cable modem/ HFC technology;

- ii. DSL technology; or
- iii. terrestrial fixed wireless technology utilizing entirely licensed spectrum (LFW) or using a hybrid of licensed and unlicensed spectrum (ULFW).
- c. Alternative Technologies: a project that will provision service via technology that does not qualify as RBS, including ULFW and low-Earth orbit satellite (LEO).

**12. If we are awarded NBEAD funds, when does construction have to begin and how long will subgrantees have to complete construction?**

PAAs will include timelines for each major project milestone, and Subgrantee progress will be tracked against these milestones.

Unless otherwise specified in the PA and subsequent subgrant, Subgrantees will have four (4) years from the date of full execution of the subgrant to complete construction and begin delivering service to customers.

**13. If an applicant proposes all fiber, but later determines that other technology would be a better fit for a DPA, can they change to the other technology or mix technologies?**

No. Once an application is approved for NBEAD funding, the contents of the application will become part of the legal agreement (the subgrant) for the project.

**14. Can an application include serving some BSLs with fiber and others in the same DPA with an alternate technology?**

Yes. Any application proposing to serve some locations with a technology other than fiber would be considered an Other Project application.

**15. We have a national pricing scheme and cannot hold to a state pricing scheme, so what do I do? Does this mean I cannot apply for NBEAD funding?**

No, this will not prevent you from applying for NBEAD funding. As part of your PA, you will commit to the pricing scheme included in your application, with adjustments no more than annually and linked to the Consumer Price Index.

**16. What about Davis-Bacon? Does it apply to NBEAD?**

Yes, Davis-Bacon applies to NBEAD, but only to subgrants with costs greater than \$5,000,000. Per NTIA, if your project will not cross the \$5,000,000 threshold – including match – Davis-Bacon will not apply.

**17. Are assets purchased under this program subject to federal interest?**

Yes. Property and equipment (including information technology systems) purchased with NBEAD funds and having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the Subgrantee for financial statement purposes, or \$10,000 purchased with NBEAD funds are subject federal interest. The federal interest period for property and equipment acquired or improved with NBEAD subgrant funds is 10 years from the year in which the subgrant for a project has been closed out. For example, if a subgrant ends any time in 2029, the federal interest period will run through December 31, 2039.

**18. What should applicants do if the DPA in which we are interested intersects with Tribal Lands?**

Applicants who submit applications for project areas that are partially or wholly located on Tribal Lands must secure written permission from the tribe or tribes that own the land. The PA must include description and documentation of efforts to secure consent from the relevant tribe(s); and the formal consent documents must be submitted within about 60 days from notification of provisional subgrant award.

**19. Where are the Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs) in Nebraska?**

LSAs are civil jurisdictions that has a civilian average annual unemployment rate during the previous two calendar years of 20% or more above the average annual civilian unemployment rate for all states (including Puerto Rico) during the same 24-month reference period. If the national annual average unemployment rate during the referenced period is less than 6.0% then the qualifying rate is 6.0%. If the national annual average unemployment rate during the referenced period is above 10% then the qualifying rate is 10%. The Department of Labor maintains LSA designations and offers a list of these areas on their [website](#) to support programs and projects looking to increase employment in areas of need. Per the most recent list, Nebraska does not include any LSAs.