

HORIZONS

UPDATES

Summer is moving right along, and the Nebraska Broadband Office (NBO) is happy to share several updates. We continue to work with National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to finalize our challenge submission files for approval. We have submitted the suggested sample files and received them back with feedback we are incorporating. Prior to final submission, in addition to the outcomes of the challenge process, we will be running another round of deduplications of other funding sources. We will also run a “true-up” where we update to the latest version of the FCC fabric. The new fabric will add some BSLs to our map and remove others (locations determined not to be BSLs - outbuildings and other structures).

In August, NBO staff will be participating in Nebraska’s Ag & Economic Development Summit: One Nebraska hosted by Governor Jim Pillen. We are excited about how broadband access will connect and enhance lives, industries, and economies across Nebraska.

Join us at our [town halls](#) for more information on these items and other updates.

WELCOME AMBER ROSS!



NBO is excited to welcome Amber Ross as the newest member of our team. Amber joined the grants management team as a Broadband Grants Manager. Originally from Callaway, Nebraska, Amber is eager to embrace the challenge of moving to Lincoln and joining NBO.

Amber's previous role at the Central Nebraska Economic Development District (CNEDD) well-prepared her for her new position. At CNEDD, she was involved in developing a regional digital equity plan and managing grants for various communities in central Nebraska. Amber knows first hand the struggles of rural Nebraska without high-speed internet and is thrilled to be part of the initiative that connects all of Nebraska.

Amber is a graduate of the University of Nebraska and a lifelong Husker fan. NBO is grateful to add her talents and enthusiasm to the team.

Digital Equity

Digital Equity moves to NBO

In January 2024, the State Digital Equity Manager retired, taking with her a large amount of institutional knowledge associated with the program. At that time, the lead on digital equity efforts was transferred from the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) to NBO. Diane Lowe from NBO was named as Digital Equity Manager.

At the time of transition, the DE Plan was drafted and had been through a public comment period and one round of curing with NTIA. NBO and NITC staff coordinated the transition of knowledge and priorities. New DE staff revised the DE Plan and secured NTIA approval on March 28, 2024. The plan can be found [here](#).

Digital Equity is intended to be a complementary program to BEAD. We look forward to working with all the previous stakeholders as well as growing our network as we expand the focus of our work.

Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program: Notice of Funding Opportunity Released by NTIA on July 24, 2024

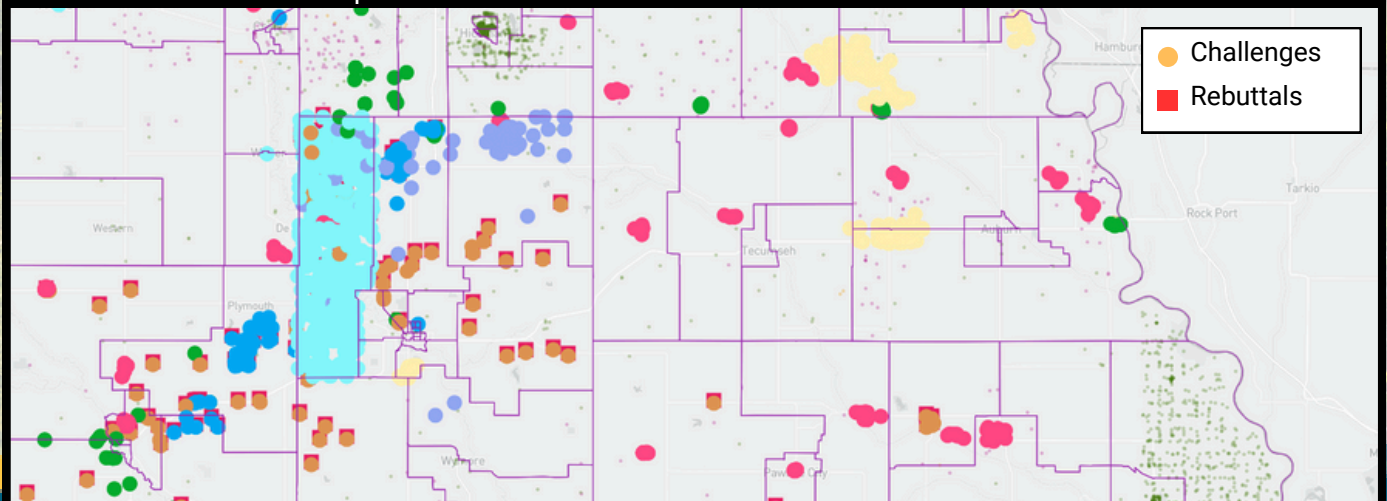
The goal of the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program is to fund programs that ensure communities have the access and skills to fully participate in the digital world, regardless of their background or circumstances. This federal program will complement Nebraska's Capacity Grant Program.

This is the first funding opportunity from the \$1.25 billion Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, the third of the three Digital Equity Act programs. The Digital Equity Act provides \$2.75 billion to establish three grant programs that promote digital equity and inclusion.

These grants are administered by NTIA. For information about who can apply and other resources, please visit: <https://www.internetforall.gov/program/digital-equity-competitive-grant-program>

Submittal Deadline is 09/23/2024

NBO Rebuttal Map - Southeast Nebraska focused



RFQ Published

Professional Services for Broadband Deployment – Grant management, subgrantee compliance and monitoring

NDOT is seeking a statement of qualifications from consultants who wish to be considered to provide these services.

The scope of work and the assumption about tasks is based on a 5-year project timeline. NBO is requiring three tasks to be met in order to properly, efficiently, transparently, and objectively execute the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. All tasks are required to be in compliance with NTIA guidelines and protocols.

Tasks 2 and 3 require a front-end review of prospective subgrantee submissions, and a back-end compliance assessment of the buildouts conducted by awarded subgrantees as outlined in the task description.

Please do not call or write NDOT staff for information regarding the services in this RFQ. Email all inquiries/questions to NDOT Procurement Engineer at: ndot.pdRFQinfo@nebraska.gov or call (402) 479-4778.

NBO STAFF

Patrick Haggerty, Director
Patrick Redmond, Deputy Director
Diane Lowe, Grants and Budget Administrator & Digital Equity Manager
Rachel Kilcoin, Communications Director
Trevi Harrison, Outreach Coordinator
Josh Russo, Grants Manager
Amber Ross, Grants Analyst
Caleb Pruss-Hansen, Administrative Program Officer

Task 1: Grant Portal

Task 2: Performance and Compliance Engineer Monitoring

Task 3: NEPA and Section 106 Compliance and Monitoring

**Statements of Qualifications are due
Wednesday, August 7, 2024, 1:00 P.M.**

<https://dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/business-opp/consult-service-opp/rfq-2415/>

Dates to note

8/7 - Statement of Qualifications due

8/14 - Post Short-List Consultants
& Interview Schedule

8/19 - Interview

8/24 - Post Final Selections

TOWN HALLS

Watch for upcoming [Town Halls](#) on our website and follow us on [Facebook](#).

Previous Town Hall recordings are available on our website if you are unable to attend. Attending live provides the opportunity to ask questions to staff directly.

If there is a topic you would like to hear more about or a speaker you would recommend, we welcome your input.

