

NJBIDE Pilot Program application

Technical assistance webinar #2

This session will be recorded

January 15, 2025

Slides updated January 16, 2025

Introductions



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Agenda

NJBIDE recap and webinar overview

Changes to application submission process

Award processes

Compliance

Reporting

Disbursements/reimbursements



NJBIDE Pilot Program fast facts

New Jersey Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Equity (NJBIDE)

- Applications close February 7, 2025, at 5:00PM
- Projects need to be substantively complete no later than **December 31, 2026**
- NJBIDE Pilot Program is prioritizing investment in **six counties** with lower access to reliable and affordable high-speed broadband service (Atlantic, Burlington, Cumberland, Essex, Salem, and Warren) and other communities experiencing social vulnerability

\$52.7M
In funding

Available resources for NJBIDE applicants



- 1 Application Instructions
- 2 Application Intake Form
- 3 Information guides
 - NJBIDE Application Overview
 - Scoring and Evaluation Criteria
- 4 Application Intake Form Walkthrough Video
- 5 Regularly updated FAQ document

To access all these resources, visit the [NJBIDE resource hub](#)

How to apply to NJBIDE

1 Fill out the Application Intake Form

2 Fill out all other required documents (Listed on the NJBIDE [Resources for Applicants](#) page)

3 Submit all required documents to the BPU e-Filing System (Infoshare) referencing Docket No. T023100776

A BPU e-Filing System Walkthrough has been posted on the [Resources for Applicants](#) page





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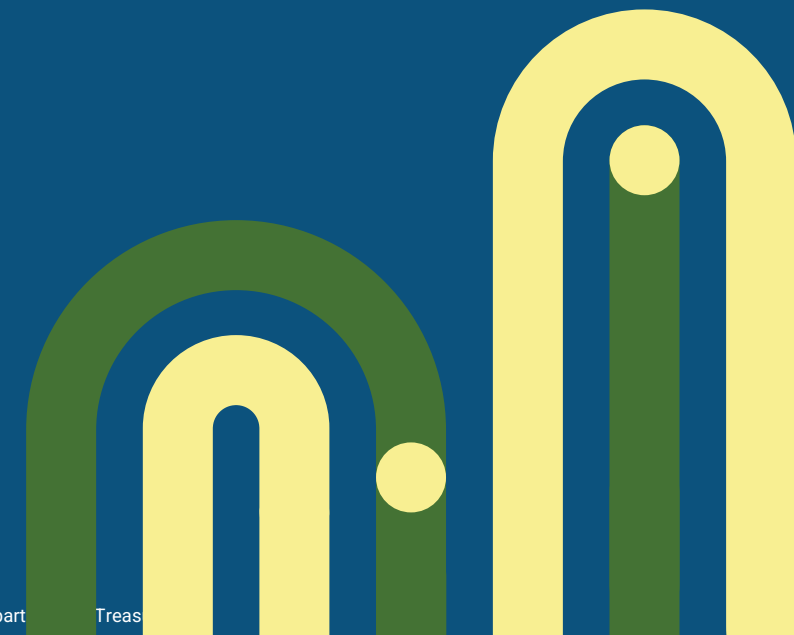
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Required documents submission

Applicants should submit all NJBIDE application materials through BPU's e-Filing system ("BPU External Access" or "Infoshare") instead of the SAGE/IGX portal. Applicants have already been asked to submit their shapefiles via the e-Filing system, so this change simply involves uploading the entirety of their application package instead of just the shapefiles.

Please refer to the following resources that can be found on the NJBIDE Applicant Resources webpage:

- **Required documents checklist**
- **BPU e-Filing System Walkthrough**

When submitting your files, please make sure to reference the docket number TO23100776 and to mark your documents as confidential. Detailed guidance on how to do this is provided in the Walkthrough.

Webinar Agenda



The remaining time of this webinar will be devoted to the following topics:

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Changes to application submission process

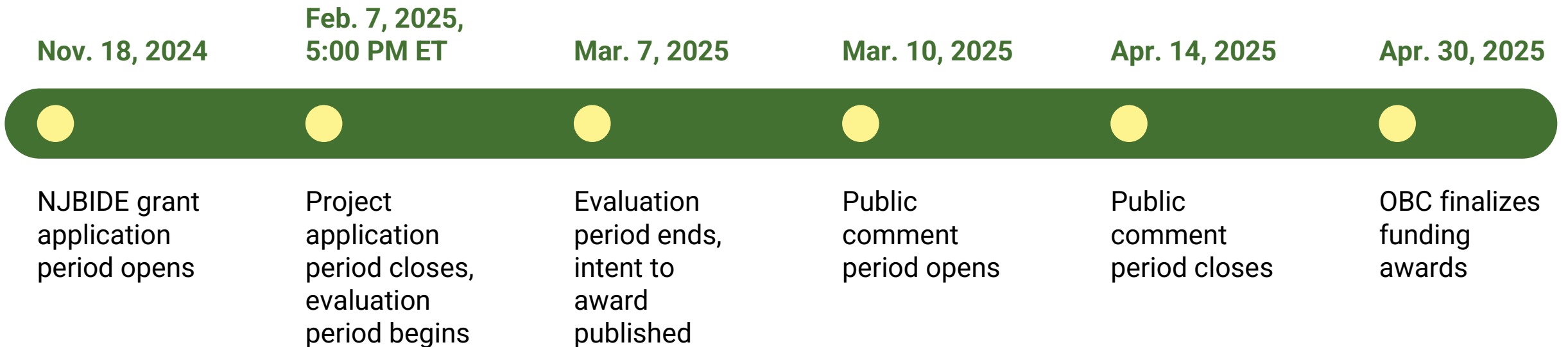
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The NJBIDE application timeline



The Office of Broadband Connectivity will publish its intent to award approved projects at least thirty days before awards are finalized



During this period, individuals and entities (including, but not limited to, broadband service providers, elected officials, and constituents) may provide comments on any application and/or award decision, including challenges to OBC's award decisions during the public comment period



The instructions to submit a public comment will be posted to the OBC webpage as soon as it becomes available for publication



Comments raised during this period are subject to public disclosure

Deconfliction Process

As of January 13, 2025, OBC has revised its deconfliction process to clarify that **OBC will handle deconfliction efforts internally and work directly with applicants** on an individual basis to make necessary project modifications

This approach eliminates the need for competitors to engage in discussions that could potentially implicate antitrust concerns

OBC will conduct its scoring and selection process, as described in Section 8.1 of the Application Instructions, and then identify if there are overlaps among likely awardees

In the case of an overlap: the higher-scoring application will retain its project area intact, while OBC will directly negotiate with the remaining likely awardee(s) to revise their project areas to exclude any locations that have been awarded to higher-scoring applications

The deconfliction process will begin immediately following the scoring and evaluation phase and will continue until all necessary project modifications have been finalized

The OBC requires that each awarded grant applicant enter into a grant agreement



The grant agreement will confirm the grant award, including the amount of the grant award and match or contributions, the scope of the project, and the terms and conditions ordered by the OBC



The grant award is not final until the applicant signs and returns the grant agreement and the agreement has been executed on behalf of the Board



A grant recipient shall have 30 days from its notice of award to negotiate and sign a grant agreement

- If a grant agreement is not signed by a grant recipient within 30 days of the notice of award, the OBC shall reserve the right to rescind the award and proceed to award a grant agreement to the next highest-scored applicant with priority status, consistent with the terms of these Application Instructions, for the awarding of a grant

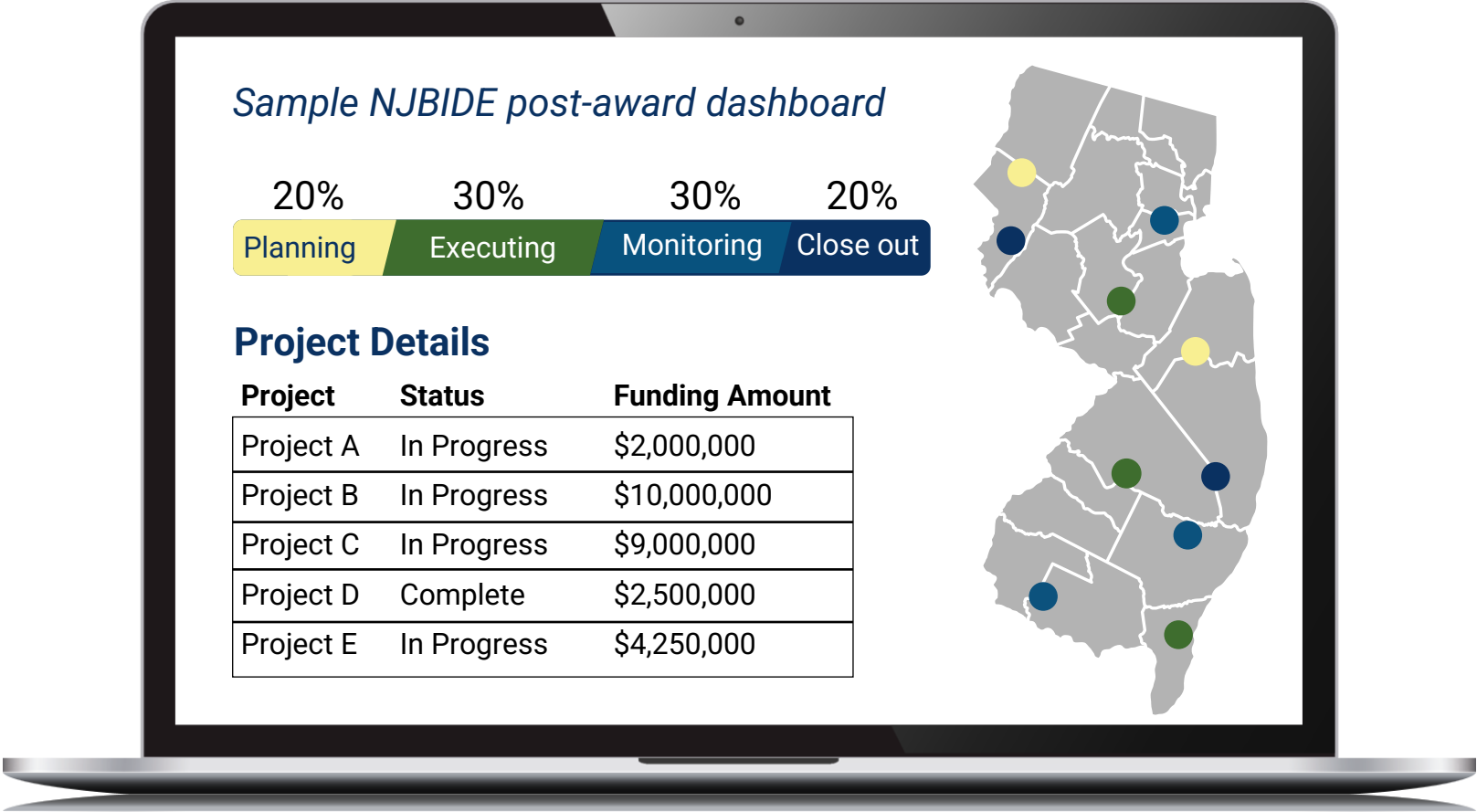
All grant funds must be expended by the end of the performance period on December 31, 2026

This deadline is firm and applies even if delays in project completion are outside the grantee's control

Failure to fully utilize the awarded funds by this deadline will require recipients to return any remaining funds to the Treasury



Following the awarding of funding, OBC will launch a project dashboard that will provide details on the status of awarded projects





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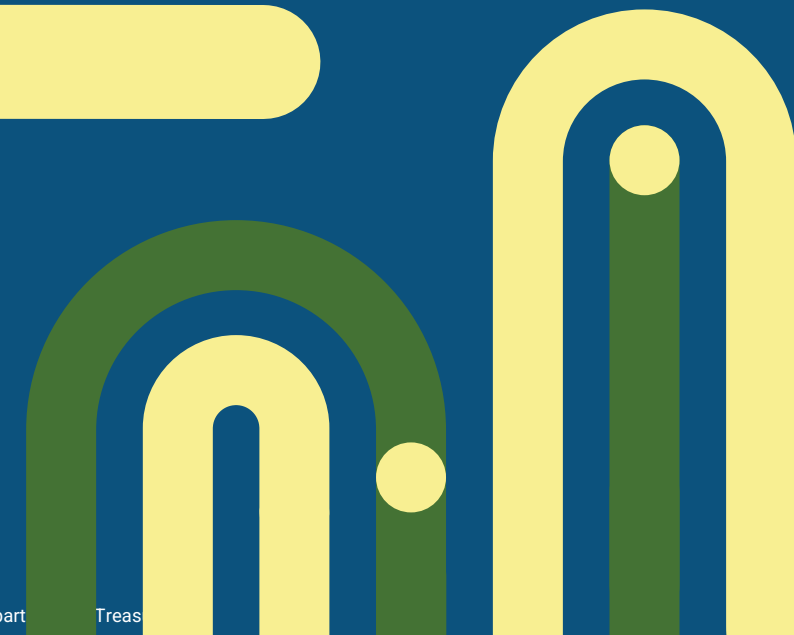
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NJBIDE projects must meet specific compliance standards and ensure quality broadband service

Key areas of compliance

1



Speed requirements

2



Pricing guidelines

3



Low-cost service offerings

4



Reporting

5



Data caps



Projects must be designed to deliver, upon project completion, service that reliably meets or exceeds 100 Mbps download and upload speeds

If this is impractical for a project to be designed to deliver services at such speed due to geography, topography, or excessive cost, the project must be designed so that:

- It reliably meets or exceeds 100 Mbps download speeds and between 20 Mbps and 100 Mbps upload speeds
- It is be scalable to a minimum of 100 Mbps symmetrical for download and upload speed

Source: [CPF Guidance from Treasury](#)

This project is being supported, in whole or part, by federal award number CPFFN0185 awarded to the State of New Jersey by the U.S. Department of Treasury

Projects must be substantially complete by December 31, 2026

Substantial completion is defined as the date for which the project can fulfill the primary operations that it was designed to perform, delivering services to end-users

At substantial completion, service operations and management systems infrastructure must be operational





When providing service, grant recipients must adhere to specific pricing guidelines based on their service history and project commitments

Providers with a history of serving 1,000+ consumers for 5+ consecutive years must maintain consistent pricing with other state offerings

Other providers must adhere to cost rates specified in their project application throughout the ten-year service agreement

Grantees can annually adjust the cost rate in line with the previous year's percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index

Source: [NJBIDE Application Instructions](#)





To increase broadband accessibility, grantees must ensure that a low-cost service offering is available

Applicants **must** offer at least one low-cost service offering comparable to the ACP benefit

Applicants receive points for their application in the evaluation process if they offer eligible low-income households service of less than or equal to \$30 per month after federal subsidy programs

The duration of the low-cost offering must match the grant agreement period

Grant recipients must:

- Provide annual evidence of delivering advertised or faster speeds, as agreed in the grant agreement
- Disclose any changes to data caps for the duration of the grant agreement



Summary of compliance requirements

To recap, recipients must



Deliver service that reliably meets or exceeds symmetrical 100 Mbps download and upload speeds



Ensure that a low-cost service offering is available



Ensure that projects are substantially complete by December 31, 2026



Provide annual evidence of delivering advertised speeds



Adhere to specific pricing guidelines based on their service history and project commitments



Disclose changes to data caps



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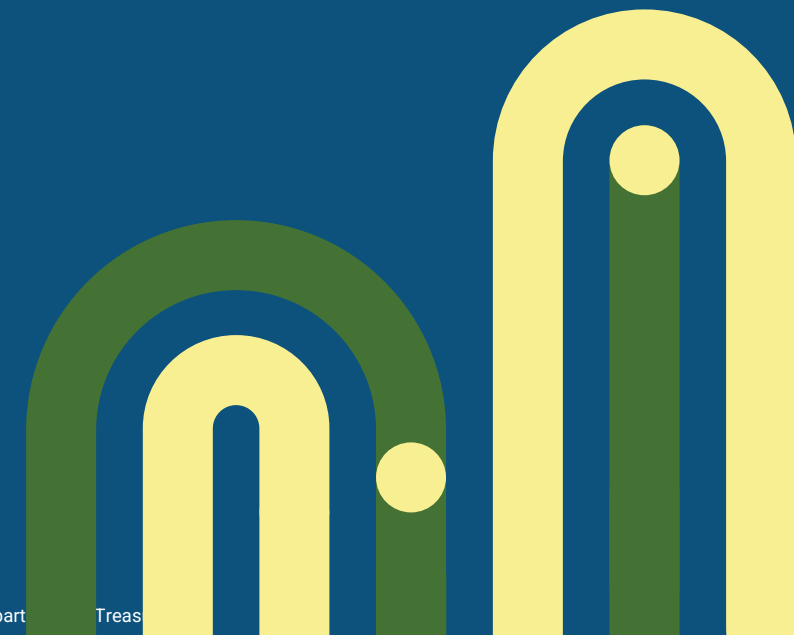
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Key Requirements


NJBIDE projects must adhere to specific reporting requirements

- 1**  **Adherence to federal, State, and local laws**
- 2**  **Compliance with State laws for governing bodies or local units**
- 3**  **Annual reports of key project metrics**
- 4**  **Monthly reports**
- 5**  **Project and Performance Reports**

Grant recipients must adhere to all applicable federal and State laws and regulations, including the ARP Act, all other applicable federal statutes, U.S. Treasury regulations, and published federal guidance applicable to NJBIDE

The Board of Public Utilities (BPU) will monitor for compliance



A photograph of two men in business attire (white shirts, blue ties) looking at a tablet together. The man on the left is wearing glasses and a watch. The background is a dark blue gradient with a yellow circular graphic element on the right side.

Governing bodies and local units must comply with State law when applying for NJBIDE funding

Counties and municipalities must be in compliance with P.L. 2007, c. 191 (N.J.S.A. 40:9D-1 to -8)

All applicants must review state law before submitting applications to BPU

Applicants should direct questions to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs

In addition to providing annual evidence of delivering advertised speeds, grant recipients must also submit annual reports to OBC summarizing key project metrics for the duration of the grant agreement

- Reports should include, but are not limited to:
 - Any right-of-way fees or permit fees paid to local government, state government, railroad, private entity, or person during the fulfillment of the grant awarded
 - Any delays encountered when obtaining a right-of-way permission
 - Average monthly subscription rates for residential and commercial broadband service in the project area
 - Number of residential and commercial locations with broadband access as a result of the project
 - Percentage of households in the project area with access to broadband service
 - Percentage of subscribers in the project area who have access to broadband service

Grant recipients must also submit monthly reports to OBC for each funded project for the duration of the grant agreement

The report shall include reporting requirements selected at the discretion of the OBC

Such reporting requirements, once selected, shall be consistently applied to all grant recipients and be effective for at least one program year

OBC reserves the right to revise reporting requirements from year to year at their discretion

Upon request, grant recipients must provide detailed project expenditure and performance reports to OBC

These requests may include:

Project reports, including but not limited to:

- expenditures, project status, sub-awards, civil rights compliance, equity indicators, community engagement efforts, geospatial data, workforce plans and practices, and information about subcontracted entities

Performance reports, including but not limited to:

- project outputs and outcomes, and evidence (consistent with FCC attestation) that they are delivering the advertised speed or a faster one, as agreed upon in the grant agreement

We appreciate your cooperation, as compliance and reporting requirements ensure responsible use of funds





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Funding in accordance with completion shall be distributed by NJBIDE to each grantee **once the grantee has demonstrated that a project has reached the following percentile completion thresholds**, which shall be defined as a percentage of the total number of prospective broadband recipients proposed to be served by the project:

Demonstrated Project Completion	Grantee funding distribution
10%	10%
35%	35%
60%	60%
85%	85%
100%	100%



Applicants disbursing NJBIDE funds to *subrecipients* must do so in compliance with NJBIDE

The final 15 percent payment requires a completion report that must be approved by OBC

An invoice for final payment shall be submitted to the OBC within 90 days of the completion date

All invoices are subject to audit for three years from the completion date



Questions?