



# THE BROADBAND EQUITY ACCESS AND DEPLOYMENT (BEAD) PROGRAM

PROGRAM DETAILS



May 2023

# This presentation focuses on BEAD – the largest of the four high-speed Internet programs administered by NTIA<sup>1</sup>

*Presentation focus*

## BEAD

**\$42.45B**

### **Broadband Equity, Access & Deployment Program**

A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it and increase adoption of high-speed internet.

## DIGITAL EQUITY

**\$2.75B**

### **Digital Equity Act**

Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.

## TRIBAL

**\$2.00B**

### **Tribal Connectivity Technical Amendments**

A program to help tribal communities expand high-speed internet access and adoption on tribal lands.

## MIDDLE MILE

**\$1.00B**

### **Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure**

A program to expand middle mile infrastructure, to reduce the cost of connecting unserved and underserved areas.

1. National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)  
Note: Funding amounts inclusive of all administrative set-asides

# BEAD Program will provide ~\$42.45B for infrastructure planning and implementation

**Funding pool**  
**\$42.45B**

A program to get all Americans online by funding partnerships between states or territories, communities, and stakeholders to build infrastructure where we need it and increase adoption of high-speed internet.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Entities eligible to apply for this program include:

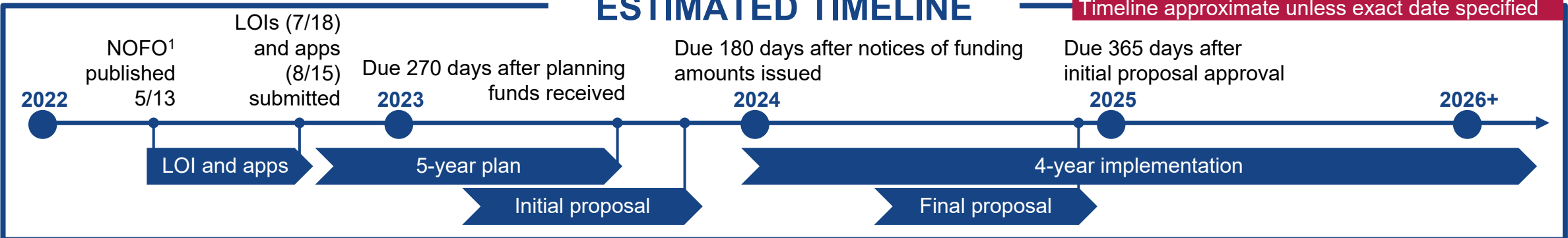
- All 50 States
- The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico
- Other Territories: U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

### Example eligible uses of funds include:

- ☆ Planning for deployment of Internet
- ☆ Deploying or upgrading Internet
- ☆ Installing Internet in multi-tenant buildings
- ☆ Implementing adoption and digital equity programs
- ☆ Workforce and job training

## ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Timeline approximate unless exact date specified



1. Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), available [here](#).

# The BEAD Program helps deliver broadband access, affordability, and adoption



## Access



**Increases access for unserved and underserved** households to ensure that all Americans have access to high-speed Internet



Ensures Americans have access to **high-quality, broadband services** to support full participation in the 21st century economy and beyond



## Affordability



Supports **affordability** of broadband services, esp. in low-income households



Fosters a system that **promotes long-term, sustainable, affordable solutions**



## Adoption and equity

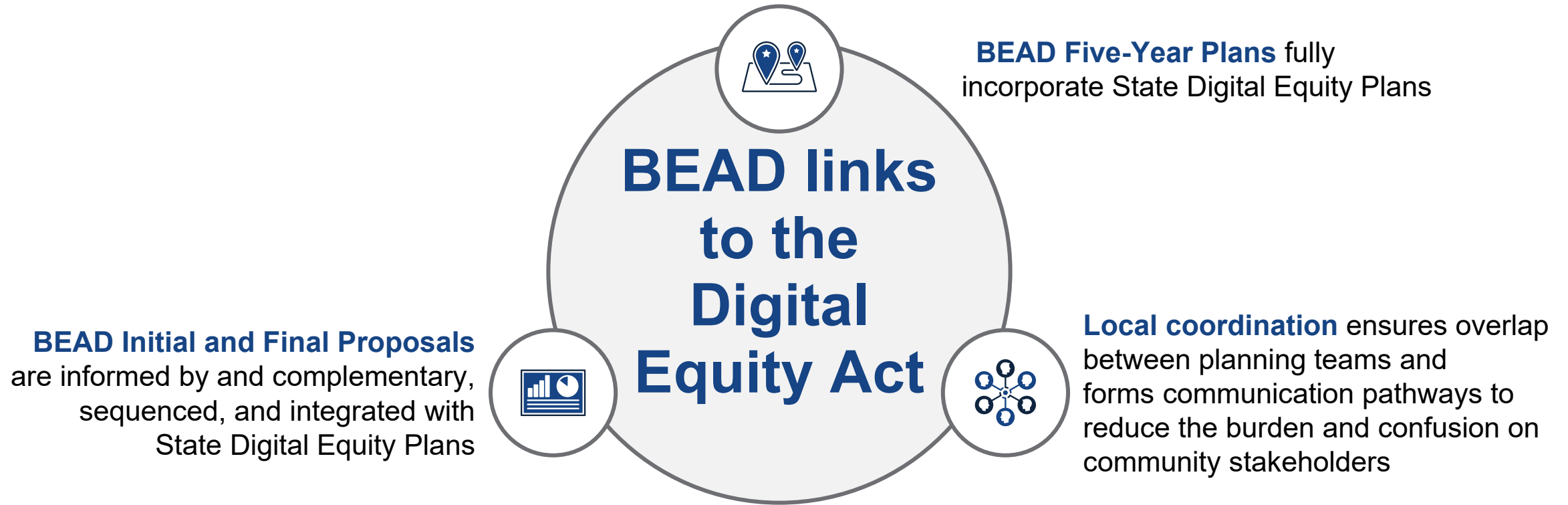


**Enables investment in digital skills training** to increase the number of households adopting high-speed Internet and narrow adoption disparities



Makes investments to ensure Americans can **participate in economy & society, reducing inequities** across sectors, including healthcare, workforce & education

# The BEAD Program is closely linked to the Digital Equity Act



States and territories should view the BEAD NOFO and State Digital Equity Planning Grant Program NOFO holistically under a **singular, unified objective of closing the digital divide**

# Funding is initially based on a minimum allocation with additional funding allocations based on high-cost and unserved locations



## New FCC Broadband DATA Maps will be utilized

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will publish new broadband coverage maps (Broadband DATA Maps)

The Broadband DATA Maps will be used to determine an Eligible Entity's total funding allocation



## Eligible Entities receive a minimum allocation

- Minimum allocations by entity:
- **\$100M** for each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
  - **\$25M** for American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



## Additional allocation based on unserved locations

Additional allocation is based on the number of **unserved locations in high-cost areas** in the Eligible Entity and the **number of unserved locations** in the Eligible Entity

# BEAD to prioritize complete coverage of unserved locations and underserved locations (where funding permits)



Complete coverage of **unserved locations** (incl. by deploying Wi-Fi to multi-family buildings)



Complete coverage of **underserved locations** (where funding permits)



NTIA urges use of remaining funds for **Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)** before other eligible uses

**Note:** If an Eligible Entity has a plan to deploy service to all unserved and underserved locations within its jurisdiction, it may pursue non-deployment initiatives before or while deployment projects are underway

2

# ELIGIBLE ENTITY APPLICATION PROCESS *FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN*



## Five-Year Action Plan | Eligible Entities that received planning funds must submit a Five-Year Action Plan



- 1 Details of the **existing broadband program**, including its activities, any previous entity-wide plans or goals for availability of broadband, and any prior experience awarding broadband deployment grants
- 2 **Current funding available for broadband deployment** or other related activities and the sources of that funding, including additional funds that may be pursued but are not yet in hand
- 3 **Existing efforts funded by the federal government** or an Eligible Entity within the jurisdiction of the Eligible Entity to deploy broadband and close the digital divide.
- 4 **Current employees** who will assist in implementing and administering the BEAD Program and their duties, as well as any existing contracted support, and any planned expansion
- 5 **Known or potential obstacles or barriers** to implementation and corresponding plans to address them.
- 6 **An asset inventory** that catalogues broadband adoption, affordability, equity, access, and deployment activities and provides details regarding any relevant partners
- 7 Details of its **external engagement process**, demonstrating collaboration with local, regional, and Tribal / Native entities
- 8 Available federal, Eligible Entity, or local **broadband availability and adoption data**
- 9 **Local broadband service needs and gaps**, including un- or underserved locations and CAIs without gigabit service, and/or any plans to make determinations where availability is unclear
- 10 **A comprehensive, high-level plan** for providing universal, reliable, affordable, high-speed broadband service throughout the jurisdiction
- 11 **Digital equity and inclusion needs, goals, and strategies**, including ways it plans to utilize BEAD funding, Digital Equity Act funding and/or other funding in concert
- 12 Alignment of the Five-Year Action Plan with **other existing and planned priorities**, incl. economic development, telehealth, workforce development, related connectivity priorities
- 13 **Technical assistance and additional capacity needed** for successful implementation of the BEAD Program

3

# ELIGIBLE ENTITY APPLICATION PROCESS

## *INITIAL PROPOSAL*

# Initial Proposal | Initial Proposals are due within 180 days of the release of the Notice of Available Amounts

Timing	Content	Review	Approval
<p>Once the Notice of Available Amounts is issued, the Assistant Secretary will invite Eligible Entities to submit Initial Proposals</p> <p>Each Eligible Entity will have <b>180 days</b> to submit its Initial Proposal</p>	<p>Initial Proposal is the <b>first draft</b> of an Eligible Entity's Final Proposal for funding</p> <p>Draft should explain how the Eligible Entity plans to ensure access to a reliable, affordable, high-speed broadband connection</p> <p>Draft should describe a <b>challenge process</b> for stakeholders to challenge whether a location is eligible for funds and a process for <b>selecting subgrantees</b></p>	<p>Prior to submission, each political subdivision and Tribal / Native entities must have opportunity to submit a plan for consideration and comment on the proposal</p> <p>Assistant Secretary will then begin the <b>iterative review process</b> in the order Initial Proposals are submitted</p> <p>Assistant Secretary decides if proposed use of funds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complies with statute</li> <li>2. Is in the public interest</li> <li>3. Effectuates the purposes of the statute</li> </ol>	<p>When the Assistant Secretary approves of the Initial Proposal, the Eligible Entity may receive <b>20% of its total allocation</b> for expenditures specifically approved in the initial proposal</p>

# Initial Proposal | Initial Proposals include 19 components

- Outline of **long-term objectives** ☆
- Support of **local, Tribal, and regional broadband planning efforts** ☆
- List of **existing efforts** to deploy broadband ☆
- Certification that **local coordination** was conducted
- Identification of **un- and underserved locations**
- Description of how **definition of CAI<sup>1</sup>** was applied
- Detailed plan to conduct **challenge process**
- Detailed plan to **award subgrants**, including **Extremely High Cost per Location Threshold**
- Explanation of preferences for **non-deployment eligible activities**
- Description of **initiatives Eligible Entity will implement without subgrant**

- Detail **use of strong labor standards** and plan for **labor-related subgrantee selection criteria**
- Detail plan to achieve a **diverse and highly-skilled workforce**
- Support of **minority- and women-owned businesses**
- Steps to **reduce costs and barriers** to deployment
- Assessment of **climate threats and mitigation methods**
- Description of **low-cost plans** to be offered
- Description of intended use of **20% funding**
- Disclosures around plans to waive laws that restrict **public sector participation**
- Certification of **intent to comply** with requirements

1. Community Anchor Institution

Legend | ☆ References to a completed Five-Year Action Plan satisfies this requirement

3

# Initial Proposal | Funding allocation includes three components and is based on new FCC maps

Eligible Entities are invited to submit Initial and Final Proposal after the Assistant Secretary issues the Notice of Available Amounts to Eligible Entities, including:

<p><b>Minimum allocation</b></p>	<p>\$100M for each State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico</p> <p>\$25M for American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands</p>
+	
<p><b>High-cost allocation</b></p>	$\frac{\# \text{ unserved locations in high-cost areas in the Eligible Entity}}{\# \text{ unserved locations in high-cost areas in the US}} \times \$4.245B$
+	
<p><b>Remaining funds allocation</b></p>	$\frac{\# \text{ unserved locations in the Eligible Entity}}{\# \text{ unserved locations in the US}} \times \text{Remaining funds}^1$

**New FCC Broadband DATA Maps** will be utilized to identify unserved locations<sup>2</sup>

Eligible Entities shall develop a **challenge process** for stakeholders to challenge whether a location or CAI is served, unserved, or underserved

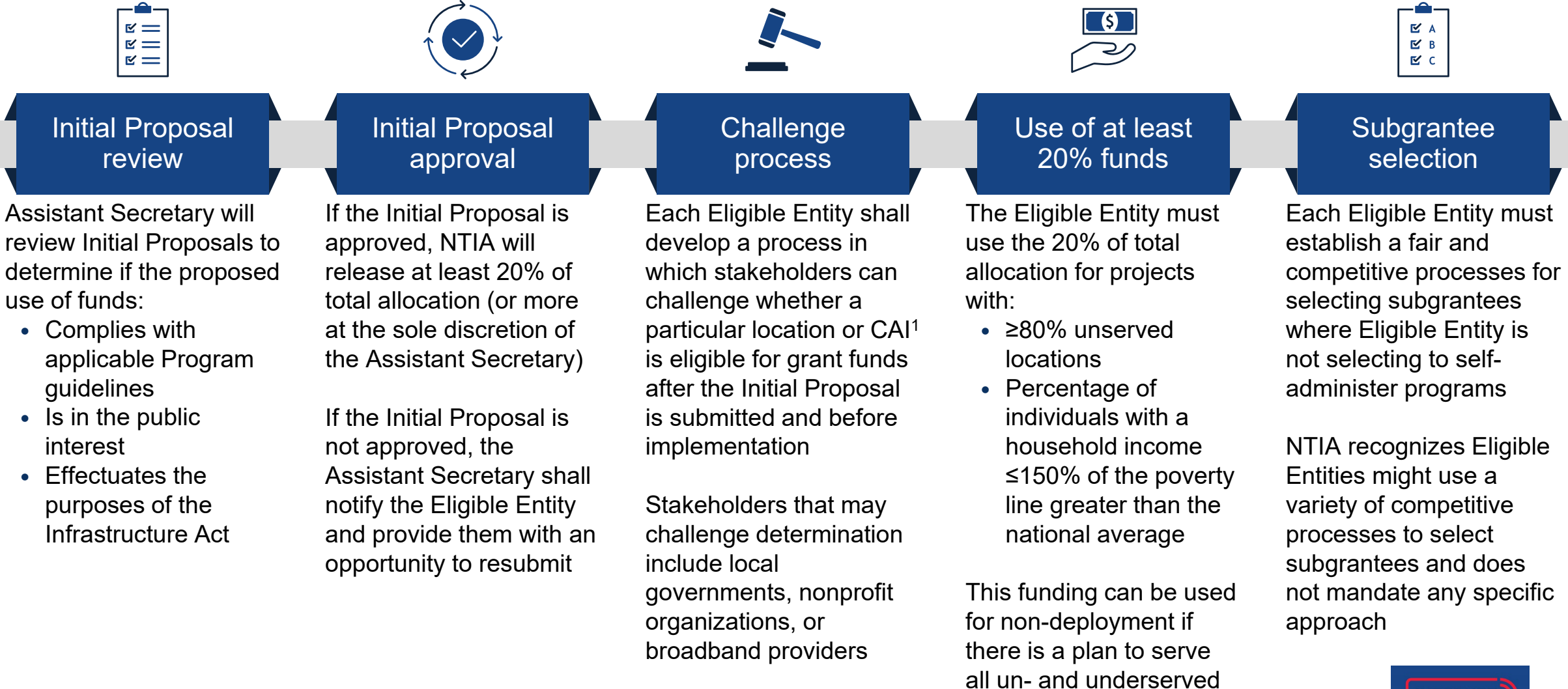
At least 60 days before allocating funds, Eligible Entities must **document the final list** of unserved locations, underserved locations, and eligible community anchor institutions

**Note: Eligible Entities can use no more than 2% for administrative purposes**

1. \$41.6B – minimum initial allocation – high-cost allocation 2. The Assistant Secretary will, in coordination with the Commission, choose a date certain upon which the Broadband DATA Maps will be utilized to identify unserved locations (the “Allocation Date”)

3

# Initial Proposal | If the Initial Proposal is approved, NTIA will release at least 20% of total allocation for select purposes



Assistant Secretary will review Initial Proposals to determine if the proposed use of funds:

- Complies with applicable Program guidelines
- Is in the public interest
- Effectuates the purposes of the Infrastructure Act

If the Initial Proposal is approved, NTIA will release at least 20% of total allocation (or more at the sole discretion of the Assistant Secretary)

If the Initial Proposal is not approved, the Assistant Secretary shall notify the Eligible Entity and provide them with an opportunity to resubmit

Each Eligible Entity shall develop a process in which stakeholders can challenge whether a particular location or CAI<sup>1</sup> is eligible for grant funds after the Initial Proposal is submitted and before implementation

Stakeholders that may challenge determination include local governments, nonprofit organizations, or broadband providers

The Eligible Entity must use the 20% of total allocation for projects with:

- ≥80% unserved locations
- Percentage of individuals with a household income ≤150% of the poverty line greater than the national average

This funding can be used for non-deployment if there is a plan to serve all un- and underserved

Each Eligible Entity must establish a fair and competitive processes for selecting subgrantees where Eligible Entity is not selecting to self-administer programs

NTIA recognizes Eligible Entities might use a variety of competitive processes to select subgrantees and does not mandate any specific approach

1. Community Anchor Institution

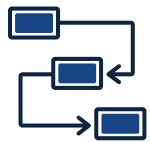
3

## Initial Proposal | The eligible entity must conduct a process for stakeholders to challenge if a location is eligible for funds



**First**, each Eligible Entity must develop and describe in the Initial Proposal a process to challenge its determination of whether a particular location or CAI<sup>1</sup> is eligible for grant funds

---



**Second**, the Eligible Entity shall conduct the challenge process (once approved by the Assistant Secretary) before allocating grant funds received from BEAD for the deployment of broadband networks

---



**Third**, after resolving each challenge and at least **60 days before allocating funds** for deployment, an Eligible Entity must **provide public notice of the final classification** of each unserved location, underserved location, or eligible community anchor institution

---



**Fourth**, NTIA has discretionary authority to reverse the determination of an Eligible Entity with respect to the eligibility of a particular location or community anchor institution

1. Community Anchor Institution

## Initial Proposal | Eligible Entities must establish fair, open, and competitive processes for selecting subgrantees



### Principles for the Eligible Entity's subgrantee selection process:

- May fund an unserved or underserved project area as small as a **single location**
- May include **Middle Mile Infrastructure** in or through any area required to reach interconnection points or otherwise required to serve an unserved location, underserved location, or eligible Community Anchor Institution
- May not fund a project already subject to a **federal or State commitment** for broadband deployment unless Eligible Entity demonstrates to the Assistant Secretary that it is necessary to achieve the goals of the program and receives a waiver
- Must **maximize the public benefits** by maximizing match and reducing costs to consumers
- May seek bids for unserved locations, underserved locations, and CAs **collectively or separately**
- May not exclude **different types of subgrantees** from eligibility (e.g., cooperatives, nonprofits, public-private partnerships, private companies, public or private utilities, public utility districts, or local governments)
- May solicit proposals from prospective subgrantees at the **geographic level of its choosing** (e.g., per-location, per-census block, etc.) or ask prospective subgrantees to define their own proposed project areas
- Must include the **level of BEAD subsidy** required to serve a specific location
- May encourage providers to **expand their existing/proposed service areas** and may consider inducements (e.g., use State funds for match) if the Eligible Entity has **received no proposals** to serve a location that is unserved or underserved
- Must submit proof of the **Tribal Government's consent** to deployment to Unserved Service Projects or Underserved Service Projects that include any locations on Tribal Lands
- May decline to select a proposal that **exceeds the extremely high cost per location threshold**

Further guidance will be provided in subsequent webinars



3

## Initial Proposal | Complete coverage of unserved locations and underserved locations (where funding permits)



### First, Eligible Entities must serve all unserved locations (incl. serving multi-tenant buildings)

- **Unserved locations** lack reliable internet with download speeds <25 Mbps, upload speeds <3 Mbps, and latency <100ms



### Second, Eligible Entities must serve all underserved locations

- **Underserved locations** lack reliable internet with download speeds <100 Mbps, upload speeds <20 Mbps, and latency <100 ms



### Next, NTIA strongly urges Eligible Entities serve Eligible Community Anchor Institutions

- **Eligible Community Anchor Institutions** include schools, libraries, hospitals and entities that facilitate greater use of high-speed Internet service by vulnerable populations and have download speed <1 Gbps
- **Other eligible uses** include affordability programs, cybersecurity training, workforce development, etc.
- If an Eligible Entity wants to use funds for other eligible uses instead of deploying service to eligible Community Anchor Institutions, then it must provide a strong rationale

**Note:** If an Eligible Entity has a plan to deploy service to all unserved and underserved locations within its jurisdiction, it may pursue non-deployment initiatives before or while deployment projects are underway

# Initial Proposal | When selecting among proposals, Eligible Entities must use an approved process with certain criteria

Process must first assess which locations have one or more proposals that meet two criteria:

1. Satisfy subgrantee requirements
2. Priority Broadband Projects

Priority Broadband Projects are projects that will rely entirely on **fiber-optic technology** to reach end-user premises

Except that an Eligible Entity may disqualify any project that *surpasses the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold*

**Primary criteria** must account for **≥75%** of the total selection criteria available in choosing between Priority Broadband proposals

## Priority Broadband Projects

If there is **only one** priority project proposal for an area, that proposal is the default winner unless a waiver is granted

If there is **more than one** priority proposal, run competition, affording benefits to the following factors:

- ★ Minimal BEAD Program outlay
- ★ Affordability
- ★ Fair labor practices
- ★ Speed to deployment
- ★ Workforce development
- ★ Open access
- ★ Local and Tribal coordination

## Non-priority projects

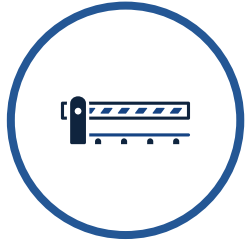
If there is **only one** project proposal for an area, that proposal is the default winner unless a waiver granted

If there is **more than one** proposal, run competition, affording benefits to the following factors:

- ★ Minimal BEAD Program outlay
- ★ Affordability
- ★ Fair labor practices
- ★ Speed to deployment
- ★ Speed and tech capabilities
- ★ Workforce development
- ★ Open access
- ★ Local and Tribal coordination

3

## Initial Proposal | Eligible Entity must identify "Extremely High Cost per Location Threshold"

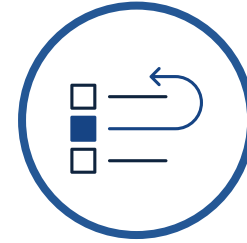


### Eligible Entities must identify Extremely High Cost per Location Threshold in Initial Proposal

The Extremely High Cost per Location Threshold is a BEAD subsidy cost per location above which an Eligible Entity may decline to select a proposal if an alternative technology meeting program technical requirements would be less expensive

In the Initial Proposal, Eligible Entities must identify or detail a process for identifying an Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold

NTIA expects Eligible Entities to set the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold as high as possible to help ensure that end-to-end fiber projects are deployed wherever feasible



### Eligible Entities use Extremely High Cost per Location Threshold in subgrantee selection

An Eligible Entity may decline a proposal that requires a BEAD subsidy that exceeds the threshold if an alternative technology meeting the program's technical requirements is less expensive

If no technology meeting the program's requirements is deployable for a subsidy less than the threshold, an Eligible Entity is authorized to select a proposal involving a less costly technology that does not satisfy the program's baseline technical requirements



3

## Initial Proposal | Subgrantees must meet general and specific qualification requirements

### General qualifications

Eligible Entities shall ensure that any prospective subgrantee is capable of carrying out activities funded by the subgrant in a competent manner and in compliance with all applicable laws



### Seven specific qualifications:

**Financial capability:** Certification of financial qualifications, letter of credit, audited financial Statements, and project pro forma analyses

**Managerial capability:** Resumes for key personnel, org charts, and narrative describing qualifications

**Technical capability:** Network design, diagram, project cost, buildout timeline and milestones, and capital investment schedule

**Compliance with laws:** Permit worker-led health and safety committees that management will meet with upon reasonable request

**Operational capability:** Certification of operational capability and certification for experience (e.g., for broadband service experience)

**Ownership:** Provide ownership info, including name address and citizenship of any party with >10% stock in applicant<sup>1</sup>

**Other public funding:** Disclose any applications for broadband service projects using public funds

1. Consistent with requirements set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 1.2112(a)(1)-(7)

# Initial Proposal | Matching funds ≥25% of project costs are required for deploying broadband service projects

## Requirement

Matching funds ≥25% of project costs provided by subgrantee, an Eligible Entity, local government, a utility, a cooperative, a nonprofit, a for-profit company, regional planning or governmental organization, or any combination thereof

## Preference for minimum subsidy

Eligible Entities are required to incentivize matches >25% to reduce the federal share of projects and extend the reach of BEAD Program funding

## Federal funds

Regarding Federal funds, only funds for deploying broadband service that were provided to eligible entities under four statutes may be used as matching funds<sup>1</sup>

## In-kind matches

Matching funds may be cash or in-kind contributions consistent with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth at 2 C.F.R. Part 200

## Match waivers

The Assistant Secretary will grant match waivers only in extraordinary circumstances to serve the public interest and effectuate the purposes of the BEAD Program (e.g., projects in designated “high-cost areas”)

1. (1) The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Public Law 116-127; 134 Stat. 178), (2) the CARES Act (Public Law 116-136; 134 Stat. 281), (3) the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260; 134 Stat. 1182), and (4) the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law 117-2; 135 Stat. 4)



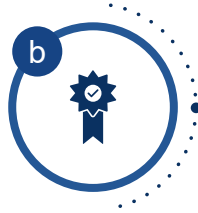
# ELIGIBLE ENTITY AND SUBGRANTEE OBLIGATIONS

# Eligible Entity obligations | Eligible Entities must meet eight programmatic requirements



## **Consider all provider types**

• May not exclude co-ops, nonprofits, public-private partnerships, private companies, utilities, public utility districts, or local government from eligibility



## **Ensure subgrantee accountability**

• Must include sufficient accountability procedures to ensure subgrantee compliance with Program requirements



## **Local coordination**

• Must coordinate with political subdivisions and local, Tribal, and community-based orgs



## **Equitable and nondiscriminatory distribution of funds**

• Must distribute funds and ensure subgrantee uses funds in an equitable and nondiscriminatory manner



## **Fair labor practices**

• Must give preferential weight to projects based on the strength of their fair labor practices



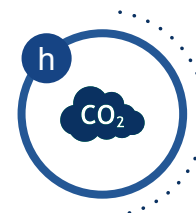
## **Highly skilled workforce**

• Must make appropriate investments to develop a highly-skilled, diverse workforce



## **Civil rights and nondiscrimination laws**

• Must require subgrantees to agree to abide by the non-discrimination requirements



## **Climate resiliency**

• Must demonstrate that they have sufficiently accounted for current and future weather- and climate-related risks

Select details on next slides

C

# Local coordination | Eligible Entities to detail ongoing local coordination efforts and plan to fulfill future requirements



## Geographic coverage



Coordination must include Tribal, rural, suburban, and urban areas

Each political subdivision and Tribal / Native entity must be given:

- Opportunity to submit a plan for Eligible Entity consideration
- Opportunity to comment on Eligible Entity proposals



## Diverse stakeholders



Coordination must include a diversity of stakeholders

Eligible Entities must ensure Tribal / Native entities are involved in developing plans (including via a formal Tribal consultation process)

Example stakeholders include State agencies, CAIs, non-profits, etc.



## Outreach mechanisms



Coordination must include multiple mechanisms to ensure broad awareness and participation

Example mechanisms include listening sessions, public meetings, websites, social media, etc.



## Transparency



Coordination must include clear procedures to ensure transparency

Examples include websites, periodic reports, in-person meetings, etc.



## Un-/underserved and under-represented communities



Coordination must target un-/underserved, and underrepresented communities that have historically faced barriers in participating in federal programs

Examples include an advisory board with representatives, surveys to better understand needs, etc.



# Fair labor practices and highly skilled workforce | Entities must also consider fair labor practices and plan for a highly skilled workforce



## Fair Labor Practices

Eligible Entities are required to give **preferential weight** to projects based on the strength of the showing in their application on **fair labor practices**

Initial and Final Proposals must have descriptions of how subgrantees will:

- Demonstrate their compliance with **federal labor and employment laws**
- Ensure compliance in **their own labor and employment practices**, as well as those of their contractors and subcontractors



## Highly Skilled Workforce

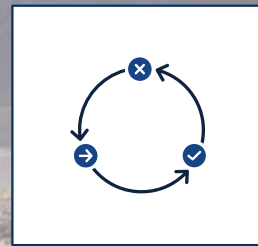
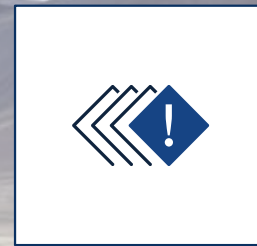
Eligible Entities and subgrantees should invest in developing a highly-skilled, diverse workforce for the new jobs that need to be filled

Initial and Final Proposals must include descriptions of how the EE will:

- Ensure subgrantees use a **highly trained workforce** able to carry out work safely and effectively
- Develop and promote **sector-based partnerships**
- Create **equitable on-ramps** into broadband-related jobs
- Ensure that the new jobs are available to a **diverse pool** of workers

h

# Climate resiliency | Applicants must account for current and future weather- and climate-related risks



Identify **geographic areas** for an initial hazard screening and time scales for such screenings



Identify the most important **weather and climate hazards** in these areas



Characterize **risks to new infrastructure** funded by BEAD for 20 years following deployment



Identify how the proposed plan will **avoid or mitigate the risks** identified



Detail the applicant's plans for periodically **repeating this process** over the life of the project

# Subgrantee obligations | Subgrantees must meet three programmatic requirements

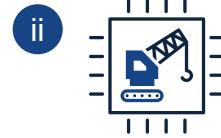


## Network capabilities

**Speed:**  $\geq 100/20$  Mbps or 1/1 Gbps for CAIs

**Latency:** 95% of measurements below 100 ms round-trip time

**Outages:** <48 hrs over any 365-day period except in the case of natural disasters or force majeure



## Deployment requirements

**Deadlines:** Deploy and begin service not later than four years after subgrant received (with possible one year extension)

**Milestones:** Meet milestones established by Eligible Entities

**Conduit access points:** Include interspersed conduit access points at regular and short intervals for interconnection



## Service obligations

**Low-cost plan:** Offer a low-cost option for all eligible subscribers

**Consumer protections:** Do not impose data usage caps

**Access to service:** Reasonable and non-discriminatory terms and conditions

**Public notice:** Conduct awareness campaigns to increase adoption

**Interconnection and wholesale access:** Permit interconnection for MM infrastructure receiving funding

**Cybersecurity and supply chain:** Adhere to baseline requirements

# Service obligations | Subgrantees must offer at least one low-cost broadband service option for all eligible subscribers

## Eligible Entities to propose "low-cost broadband service option" definition for approval

Eligible Entities shall submit a proposed definition to the Assistant Secretary for approval in their Final Proposal

In determining whether to approve a definition, the Assistant Secretary will consider, among other factors:

- 1 Cost to an Eligible Subscriber<sup>1</sup> after subsidies (both monthly and non-recurring charges)
- 2 Plan's basic service characteristics
- 3 Ability to apply Affordable Connectivity Benefit subsidy
- 4 Ability to upgrade to any new low-cost service plans offering with better technical specifications

The "low-cost broadband service option" is in addition to requirement to submit a **middle-class affordability plan** to ensure that all consumers have access to affordable high-speed internet access



## Example definition from BEAD NOFO

**Speed:**  $\geq 100/20$  Mbps or FCC performance benchmark<sup>2</sup>

**Upgrades:** Permits eligible subscribers with one low-cost broadband service option to upgrade to another low-cost broadband service option with higher speeds at no costs

**Latency:**  $\leq 100$  ms

**Data caps, surcharges, etc.:** Not subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling; subject only to the same acceptable use policies as other broadband plans

**Subsidies:** Subgrantees required to participate in ACP; eligible subscribers that are eligible for a subsidy can apply the subsidy to the option

**Cost:**  $\leq \$30$  incl. taxes and fees for at least one option

1. Any household seeking to subscribe to broadband Internet access service that qualifies for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) or any successor program 2. The performance benchmark for fixed terrestrial broadband service established by the FCC pursuant to Section 706(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended

