

# BEAD-Funded Connect Illinois Round 4 Application Guidebook

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# I Introduction

This document is a guidebook for the application process for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)-funded Connect Illinois Round 4. The purpose of this guidebook is to provide applicants with full guidance for the materials required as part of the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 grant application, and to assist users in preparing a successful application that meets all Federal and State requirements.

For further details on the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 program, including post-award requirements, please refer to the [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) associated with the grant program, as well as the State of Illinois's [BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II](#).

## I.1 Program Introduction

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) awarded Illinois \$1.04 billion in federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds to connect all homes and businesses to high-speed internet.<sup>1</sup> Connect Illinois Round 4 uses this BEAD funding to support the deployment of broadband service to unserved and underserved Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) and eligible Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs).

In line with BEAD requirements to develop a competitive, fair, and open subgrantee selection process, the State of Illinois aims to support applicants in understanding the necessary procedures and requirements involved in developing successful applications that meet the requirements of the BEAD program.

As outlined in the State's Initial Proposal, Volume II, the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 application process consists of up to three waves:

1. **Wave 1:** Any prospective subgrantee can submit applications regardless of technology type or project area selected. However, the State will only review and preliminarily select applications where 10% or more of the proposed Project Area is composed of Hard-to-serve Project Area Units and that are Priority Broadband Projects (i.e., end-to-end fiber).
2. **Wave 2:** Project Area Units preliminarily selected during Wave 1 will not be available for application in Wave 2. Any prospective subgrantee can submit applications regardless of technology type or Hard-to-serve Project Area Units selected. Note that a non-Priority Reliable Broadband Service Project may only be preliminarily selected should there be no other qualifying Priority Broadband Project application that is below the Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT). Should a preliminarily selected application during Wave 1 be

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<sup>1</sup> BroadbandUSA, [BEAD Overview](#)

found to be over the EHCPLT, the applicant will have an opportunity to amend its application to reduce its BEAD outlay to be below the EHCPLT; if not possible, then the State may consider other proposals for that preliminary selectee's Project Area Unit(s).

3. **Optional Wave 3:** Should there be remaining Project Area Units that have not been preliminarily selected by the conclusion of Wave 2, the State may launch an optional Wave 3, where the remaining Project Area Units will be available for application, and all Priority Broadband Projects, Non-priority Reliable Broadband Projects, and Alternative Technology Projects (pending final NTIA guidance) will be eligible to be preliminarily selected.

Grants will be awarded at the end of the two-wave (or three-wave, if the optional Wave 3 is conducted) BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 program, following the NTIA's approval of the State's Final Proposal. Applicants are expected to follow through with their application(s) should they be preliminarily selected, and it is thus expected that the applicant has the capabilities and capacity to successfully execute the full set of applications they submit. Details on the review and selection process are included below.

## I.2 Details on Review and Selection Process

**Wave 1.** Wave 1 focuses on hard-to-serve areas in the State and end-to-end fiber applications. Specifically, the State will review all applications where at least 10 percent of the proposed Project Area is composed of Hard-to-serve Project Area Units. The State requires the selected Hard-to-serve Project Area Unit(s) and non-Hard-to-serve Project Area Unit(s) in the Project Area to be contiguous, meaning there are no non-selected Project Area Units in the way when a straight line is drawn between the selected Hard-to-serve Project Area Unit(s) and the closest selected non-Hard-to-serve Project Area Unit(s).

All qualifying Priority Broadband Project (i.e., end-to-end fiber) applications that have a sufficient share of Hard-to-serve Project Area Units will be scored for Wave 1, using the criteria specified in [Section I.3](#). The State will then rank all applications from highest to lowest by score and conduct deconfliction where there is overlap in the following order:

- a) Applications that have no competing qualifying projects for their given set of PAU(s) will first be identified as default preliminary selectees per NTIA rules.
- b) After accounting for (a), for the remaining PAUs where there are competing project applications, the highest-scoring applications for their respective set of PAU(s) will be identified as potential preliminary selectees per NTIA rules. Note, since the State will not have complete information to determine the Extremely High-Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT) at this stage of the process, the State reserves the right to hold off on selecting applications with high BEAD outlay until Wave 2 of the subgrantee process, when the State determines the EHCPLT.
- c) Then, all lower-ranking applications will be deconflicted in the following manner:

- i. If an application overlaps with (b) on a “must-include” PAU, then the applicant will be notified which PAU(s) overlap with a potential preliminary selectee, and given 10 business days to submit an application among any of the remaining PAUs that they originally applied for, or withdraw the application from State consideration for Wave 1.
  - ii. If an application does not overlap with (b) on a “must-include” PAU **AND** overlaps with (b) for 10 percent or more of the applied-for BSLs, then the applicant will be notified which PAU(s) overlap with a potential preliminary selectee, and given 10 business days to submit an application among any of the remaining PAUs that they originally applied for, or withdraw the application from State consideration for Wave 1.
  - iii. If an application does not overlap with (b) on a “must-include” PAU **AND** overlaps with (b) for less than 10 percent of the applied-for BSLs, the State will directly de-scope the application, using the reference cost as guidance.
  - iv. If an application does not overlap with (b), it will not be altered at this stage for any other overlaps it may have with non-(b) applications.
- d) All resubmitted, re-scoped and/or remaining applications will be re-scored, re-ranked, and reviewed to identify newly qualifying potential preliminary selectees. Note, at this stage, the State will not reach out to applicants for additional deconfliction, and will only deconflict those applications that can be directly de-scoped (i.e., falls under scenario (c)(iii)).
  - e) All remaining applications will be rolled over to Wave 2.

An application may not be considered eligible for Wave 1 should the deconfliction process remove all Hard-to-serve Project Area Units from the originally proposed Project Area, but the State may adjust the requirement that the project area be at least 10 percent Hard-to-serve Project Area Unit(s) for a resubmitted de-conflicted application to be considered for Wave 1.

The State reserves the right to push any and all Wave 1 applications into Wave 2 for further consideration and/or comparison against the Extremely High-Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT).

Preliminarily selected PAUs in Wave 1 will be removed from the map for later Waves and will thus **not** be eligible for new applications in subsequent Waves. Should a preliminarily selected applicant from Wave 1 be above the EHCPLT in Wave 2 and cannot comply with the EHCPLT, then the State may consider other proposals for that preliminarily selected project’s Project Area Unit(s).

**Wave 2.** In Wave 2, the State will process all Reliable Broadband Project applications, regardless of whether they are Priority Broadband Projects, or contain Hard-to-serve Project Area Units. The State will also determine the Extremely High-Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT) by the process described in the BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II, Requirement 2.4.9, and will consider Non-Priority Broadband Projects where there is no eligible Priority Broadband Project below the EHCPLT covering the same area. After determining the EHCPLT, any preliminarily selected applicants from Wave 1 above the threshold may amend their applications to comply with the threshold, including adjusting the technology or requested BEAD outlay.

The State will then conduct direct outreach to providers and subgrantees to provide coverage where needed, including for Project Area Units without a qualifying bid below the EHCPLT and no-bid Project Area Units. If all Project Area Units are accounted for after the above steps, the State will determine that no Wave 3 is required and run preliminary selections for the full State. If there are Project Area Units unaccounted for after the steps above and the State determines that Wave 3 is needed, the State will resolve conflicts and make preliminary selections for applications scoring above the threshold and roll over all remaining applications for Wave 3.

*Note on EHCPLT:* The State reserves the right to adjust the process to determine the EHCPLT described in its BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II, with the goal of connecting all eligible locations in the State while maximizing fiber coverage. The State also reserves the right to exercise discretion on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to apply the EHCPLT, and the right to award the Priority Broadband Project and use available State funding to achieve this purpose, to meet the broader goals of the BEAD Program, including but not limited to if Non-Priority Broadband Project applications are not available, or if the State views a Priority Broadband Project application as more favorable.

Preliminarily selected PAUs in Wave 2 will be removed from the map for later Waves and will thus **not** be eligible for new applications in subsequent Waves.

**Optional Wave 3.** In Wave 3, the State will publish the remaining Project Area Units and the EHCPLT. During this period, applicants with applications that were not selected will have an opportunity to (a) refine their existing applications to revise the BEAD outlay downward and/or project match upward, and/or (b) refine their existing applications to remove any conflict with project areas of preliminary selections and adjust the BEAD outlay accordingly, and/or (c) consider alternative technology in line with NTIA guidance, and/or (d) submit new applications. Then, the State will process all proposals and run the deconfliction process. In parallel, the State will reach out to providers and subgrantees to directly negotiate coverage for areas that received no bids below the EHCPLT in the same manner as above.

In the final wave of the Program, preliminary selections will be made in order, from highest score to lowest score, until funding is exhausted.

**Final review.** After the final wave, the State will conduct two review processes:

1. A review of preliminarily selected projects to confirm that the total set of preliminary selections to each prospective subgrantee is consistent with the financial, operational, and managerial capabilities submitted; and
2. A review of preliminarily selected projects to confirm that the overall selection is consistent with the BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II, and the BEAD NOFO.

After consultation with the NTIA, the list of provisional winners will be submitted to the NTIA in the Final Proposal and will be awarded once the NTIA approves the State's Final Proposal.

### I.3 Scoring Criteria

As outlined in the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO, applications will be scored by the State’s Evaluation Committee, who will review and evaluate all applications. This team will use standard criteria and associated point values to evaluate grant applications consistently and uniformly. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Below are the scoring criteria for BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, as outlined in the State’s Initial Proposal, Volume II:

<b>Primary Criteria (80%)</b>	
<b>Minimum BEAD Program outlay: Non-state match</b> Points will be allocated based on the degree to which non-state match exceeds 30 percent.	20%
<b>Minimum BEAD Program outlay: Financial need with respect to reference cost</b> Points will be allocated based on how much the application's required BEAD outlay deviates from the reference cost published by the State.	30%
<b>Affordability</b> Points will be assigned based on the price the applicant offers for either 1Gbps/1Gbps for Priority Broadband Projects (end-to-end fiber) or 100/20Mbps for other broadband projects, compared to monthly reference prices outlined in the Initial Proposal, Volume II.	15%
<b>Fair labor practices</b> Points will be assigned based on the applicant’s demonstrated record of and plans to comply with federal labor and employment laws and submission of a Project Labor Agreement.	15%
<b>Secondary Criteria (20%)</b>	
<b>Speed to deployment</b> Points will be assigned based on enforceable deployment plans within two years of executed grant agreement.	3%
<b>Speed of network and technical capabilities</b> Points will be assigned based on performance levels and the scalability of networks.	4%
<b>Open access and use of existing network</b> Points will be assigned based on the provision of open access and use of existing networks.	3%
<b>Local coordination: Evidence of community support</b> Points will be assigned based on the breadth and depth of community support for the project.	5%
<b>Local coordination: Verified financial commitment from community</b> Points will be assigned based on verified financial investment by community members and organizations.	5%

**Minimum BEAD Program outlay: Non-state match (20%)**

Similar to scoring in previous Connect Illinois grant rounds, more points will be assigned to the degree of non-State match over 30%, as a greater non-State match signifies more “skin in the game” and therefore financial risk assumed by the applicant.



Percent of eligible project costs covered by non-State match	Points
60% or more	20
55-59.9%	17
50-54.9%	14
45-49.9%	11
40-44.9%	8
35-39.9%	5
30-34.9%	2
Less than 30%	0

**Minimum BEAD Program outlay: Financial need with respect to reference cost (30%)**

Points will be assigned based on how much the application’s required BEAD outlay deviates from the reference cost published by the State. More points will be assigned to applications with lower BEAD outlay compared to the reference cost.

Note, since the State has not used a reference cost in prior Connect Illinois grant rounds, the range of deviation for which the State is awarding points—from 0% to 200% of the reference cost—may not accurately reflect the Illinois landscape. Thus, before the start of each wave of the subgrantee process, the State may adjust the alignment between percentage deviation and points allocated. The adjustments will be announced before the start of each application window.

Application’s BEAD outlay as a percentage of reference cost	Points
0-19.9%	30
20-39.9%	27
40-59.9%	24
60-79.9%	21
80-99.9%	18
100-119.9%	15
120-139.9%	12
140-159.9%	9

160-179.9%	6
180-199.9%	3
200% or more	0

### Affordability (15%)

Applicants will be scored based on the price they offer and the type of project:

Speed tier	Type of project	Monthly reference price
1G/1G	Priority Broadband Projects	\$100
100/20 Mbps	Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Projects	\$30

Based on the speed tier listed in the table above, applicants will be awarded points based on the difference between their price and the reference price. The calculation will work as follows:

For applications offering a **price lower than the reference price**, there will be an **upward adjustment** to the baseline score of 7.5, up to the maximum of 15 points, following this formula:

- $Score = 7.5 + 7.5 * [(reference\ price - commitment\ price) / reference\ price]$

For applications offering a **price higher than the reference price**, there will be a **downward adjustment** to the baseline score of 7.5, down to the minimum of 0 points, following this formula:

- $Score = 7.5 - 7.5 * [(commitment\ price - reference\ price) / reference\ price]$

### Fair labor practices (15%)

Applicants will be scored based on their demonstrated compliance record and plans to comply with federal labor and employment laws, and submission of a Project Labor Agreement.

Fair labor practices scoring sub-criteria	Points
Submission of a Project Labor Agreement (PLA)	7
No prior violations of compliance with federal labor and employment laws	5
Forward-looking commitment, with claw-back provision in case of future non-compliance	3

### Speed to deployment (3%)

Points will be awarded to applicants with enforceable deployment plans that demonstrate that the project will be completed within two years of executed grant agreement.

Scoring for speed to deployment	Points
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Construction completed within two years	3
Construction completed within four years	0

**Speed of network and technical capabilities (4%)**

Points will be awarded based on performance levels and scalability of networks, specifically the best available speed and latency after build.

Scoring for speed of network and technical capabilities	Points
100/20 Mbps, 100 ms	0
100/100 Mbps, 100 ms	2
1 Gbps/1 Gbps, 100 ms	4

**Open access and use of existing network (3%)**

Points will be awarded based on the applicant’s provision of open access wholesale last-mile broadband service for the life of the subsidized networks, on fair, equal, and neutral terms to all.

Scoring for open access and use of existing network will be based on three categories:

1. Clear description of wholesale services offered and associated rates
2. Evidence of retail ISP partners (e.g., signed commitments or contracts, letters of intent)
3. Evidence of publicly available open access policy (e.g., screenshots of website listing)

Points will be awarded in the following manner:

- 3 points if qualifying evidence is submitted for all 3 categories
- 2 points if qualifying evidence is submitted for 2 out of the 3 categories
- 0 points otherwise

**Local coordination: Evidence of community support (5%)**

Points will be awarded based on the breadth and depth of community support for the project. The State’s evaluation of the evidence of community support will be similar to its evaluation in Connect Illinois Round 3.

Example of supporting evidence include:

- Degree of personalized letters that reflect a broad spectrum of members of the community
- Degree to which the project fits into an existing community strategic plan
- Recent survey that covers a broad spectrum of the community, with statistically meaningful results regarding level of need, gaps, and project support

- Evidence of community outreach efforts to gauge interest in the project
- Other community feedback that shows compelling need and project support, defined as letters of support and input from:
  - Community members
  - Local governments
  - Non-profits
  - Community associations
  - Employers
  - Small businesses
  - Community Anchor Institutions
  - Other members of the community where a project is proposed

**Local coordination: Verified Financial Commitment from Community (5%)**

Points will be awarded based on financial investment by community members and organizations. The State’s evaluation of verified financial commitment from community will be similar to its evaluation in Connect Illinois Round 3.

To receive points for this criterion, applicants must address the following:

- Financial contribution from municipal government and/or community-based members and institutions
- In-kind resource commitments from municipal government and/or community-based members and institutions, as applicable
- Evidence to support verification of pledge

For additional details on information to submit toward these scoring criteria, please refer to [Project Form, Part 5. Scoring Criteria](#) of this document.

# II Overview of the Application Process for BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4

## II.1 Methodology and Structure

Per the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO, applications will require three types of materials:

1. **Entity-based qualification materials** are materials that provide information about the entity that is applying for grant funding. Materials must verify that the applicant meets all BEAD- and State-required qualifications to receive BEAD funds. These qualification materials only need to be submitted once and will apply across all of the entity's project applications. These materials are reviewed on an Approved / Not Approved basis, where those that do not satisfy entity-based qualification requirements will not be considered for BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4. Should an entity be found to not meet these qualifications, the entity will not be considered for subsequent further evaluation (e.g., scoring) and preliminary selections for that Wave, but will be provided feedback from the State at the end of the Wave, which the entity can address in its application during the next Wave.
2. **Project-based qualification materials** are materials that are specific to the proposed project, which will help verify whether the entity's proposed project meets all BEAD- and State-required qualifications to receive BEAD funds. These materials are project-specific, containing information unique to that project application. These materials are reviewed on an Approved / Not Approved basis, where those that do not satisfy project-based qualification requirements will not be considered for BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4. Should a project not meet these qualifications, the project will not be considered for subsequent further evaluation (e.g., scoring) and preliminary selections for that Wave, but will be provided feedback from the State at the end of the Wave, which the entity can address in its application during the next Wave.
3. **Project-based scoring materials** are project materials that are reviewed through the State's Merit Review process to calculate a score that will determine the priority by which applications will be preliminarily selected. Note, some Project-based qualification materials will be reviewed as scoring materials as well (see subsequent chapters in this Guidebook for details). While the Evaluation Committee will score and make recommendations for preliminary selections, the State will make all final decisions.

## II.2 Application Submission Flow

As outlined in the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO, the application process is a **three-part process**.

### Part 1: Entity Form

This form contains questions pertaining to all entity-based materials. Applicants who participated in the Pre-Qualification process may bypass portions of this form depending on the qualifications that were provisionally approved during the pre-qualification process. Pre-Qualification participants are advised to see Section II.4 for further details on how to provide the relevant information from the Pre-Qualification process into the application. Applicants will submit one Entity Form response for the entire application process. **Upon submission of the Entity Form, an Entity Form Submission ID will be generated (beginning with “EFS”) and emailed to the applicant.**

### Part 2: Project Form

This form contains questions pertaining to all materials that are specific to the proposed project and relevant scoring materials. To submit this form, applicants must have completed **Part 1: Entity Form** and provide their Entity Form Submission ID that is generated from the completion of the Entity Form. Applicants will submit a Project Form for each application. **Upon the submission of the Project Form, a Project Form Submission ID (beginning with “PFS”) will be generated and emailed to the applicant.**

### Part 3: Application Submission Form

This form is used to finalize and complete the application, per State of Illinois requirements. To submit this form, applicants must have completed **Part 1: Entity Form** and **Part 2: Project Form**. Applicants will then include their Entity Form Submission ID and Project Form Submission ID in the final Application Submission Form. Upon submitting the Application Submission Form, the application is officially complete and formally received by the State for review.

## II.3 Relevant Terminology

The below contains key definitions for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, defined per the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO:

Term	Definition
Assistant Secretary	The Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information or the individual who holds any successor position.
Alternative Technology	Any technology that does not qualify as Reliable Broadband Service, including Unlicensed Fixed Wireless (ULFW) and low-Earth orbit satellite (LEO), that meets the BEAD Program’s minimum technical requirements of speeds not less than 100 Mbps for downloads and 20 Mbps for uploads and latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.
BEAD	The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, Division F, Title I, Section 60102, Public Law 117-58, 135 Stat. 429 (November 15, 2021) (Infrastructure Act or Act), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
BEAD NOFO	Refers to the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) posted by the National

	Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to describe the requirements under which it will award grants for the BEAD Program.
Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL or “location”)	A business or residential location in the United States at which fixed broadband Internet access service is, or can be, installed.
Community Anchor Institution (CAI)	An entity such as a school or institute of higher education; a library; a health clinic, health center, hospital, or other medical provider; a public safety entity (e.g., a fire house, an emergency medical service station, a police station, or a public safety answering point); a public housing organization (including any public housing agency, HUD-assisted housing organization, or Tribal housing organization); a government building; a park; or a community support organization that facilitates wider use of broadband service by vulnerable populations, which include but are not limited to low-income individuals, unemployed individuals, children, the incarcerated, and aged individuals. Such community support organizations could include childcare centers, employment centers, re-entry support organizations, senior centers, and community-based organizations (CBOs).
Consortium	A group of eligible entities bidding for BEAD deployment subgrants as a multi-entity partnership. <sup>2</sup>
DCEO or Department	Refers to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.
Deconfliction	The process by which projects with overlapping project area unit(s) will be reviewed and adjusted to determine which applicant shall be awarded the overlapping project area unit(s).
Eligible Community Anchor Institution	A Community Anchor Institution that lacks access to gigabit-level broadband service. The list of Eligible Community Anchor Institutions was finalized at the conclusion of the BEAD Challenge Process and cannot be amended to add or remove additional Eligible Community Anchor Institutions.
Enforceable commitment	A commitment to deploy qualifying broadband to a location as a condition of another award for the provision of broadband service. The full list of awards counting toward an enforceable commitment can be found in the BEAD NOFO.
Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold (EHCPLT)	A cost per location above which the State has the option to decline to select a proposal if using an alternative technology meeting the BEAD Program’s technical requirements would be less expensive. The EHCPLT will be utilized during the subgrantee selection process.
GATA	Refers to the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act [30 ILCS 708].
Hard-to-serve Project Area Unit	A Project Area Unit that the State has designated as hard to serve, meeting at least one of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a high proportion of unserved BSLs;</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contains a high proportion of BSLs that have had little provider interest in prior Connect Illinois grant rounds, federal grant rounds, or outcomes of previous grant rounds (i.e., Connect Illinois Rd 1, Rd 2, and Rd 3);</li> <li>• Is in a Persistent Poverty County; or</li> <li>• Is in a High-Cost Area (HCA).</li> </ul> <p>The State will publish the list of hard-to-serve Project Area Units before the subgrantee process commences.</p>
High-cost area (HCA)	An unserved area that NTIA has determined that the cost of building out broadband service is higher, as compared with the average cost of building out broadband service in unserved areas in the United States. In the State of Illinois, this specifically refers to the following Census Block Groups (by FIPS ID), based on the NTIA’s determination as of August 2024: 170230601005 (Clark County), 171018808003 (Lawrence County), 171030001003 (Lee County), 171239613001 (Marshall County), 171599779003 (Richland County), and 171979800001 (Will County). Project areas consisting of only Project Area Units in High-Cost Areas are exempt from the minimum 25 percent matching funds requirement.
Illinois BEAD Map (or “Project Area Selection Tool”)	An interactive map created for the Illinois Office of Broadband and available via its website for purposes of administering the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program.
Must-include Project Area Unit	A Project Area Unit within an application that the applicant has identified as necessary to make the project viable. Applicants must indicate which Project Area Units are must-include Project Area Units upon application submission. During the deconfliction process, if an application’s must-include Project Area Unit(s) conflicts with the project area of a preliminarily selected project, the applicant will have the option to withdraw their application, and the application will not be automatically descope during deconfliction.
NTIA-approved challenge process dataset	The complete list of locations and Community Anchor Institutions within Illinois that are eligible for BEAD grant funds, including whether a particular location is an unserved location, underserved location, or eligible CAI.
Priority Broadband Project	A project that will provision service via end-to-end fiber-optic facilities to each end-user premise.
Program	Refers to the Connect Illinois Broadband Grant Program that uses federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) dollars as a funding source.
Project	An undertaking by a subgrantee to construct and deploy infrastructure for the provision of broadband service. A “project” may constitute a single Project Area Unit or a grouping of Project Area Units in which not less than 80 percent of broadband-serviceable locations served by the project are unserved locations or underserved locations.
Project area	A set of Project Area Units that applicants propose to serve in a subgrantee application. Applicants may pick any number of Project Area Units to form a



	project area; however, applicants may not split up a Project Area Unit when defining their project area. Project Area Units within a project area are not required to be contiguous.
Project Area Unit (PAU)	A collection of unserved and underserved locations and CAIs that are eligible for inclusion in an application. Applicants cannot break up a Project Area Unit into smaller collections of unserved and underserved locations and CAIs. Project Area Units do not overlap and collectively contain all unserved and underserved locations and eligible CAIs in the state. Only unserved and underserved locations without an enforceable commitment are included in Project Area Units.
Reference cost	The per-Project Area Unit cost benchmark established by the State to represent the estimated financial need to serve the given Project Area Unit. Reference costs are established based on CostQuest Associates' (CQA) Net Present Value estimation assuming a greenfield buildout. The reference cost of a project area is calculated as the sum of the reference costs of the PAUs.
Reliable Broadband Service	Broadband service that the Illinois BEAD map shows to be accessible to a location via (i) fiber-optic technology; (ii) cable modem / hybrid fiber-coaxial technology; (iii) digital subscriber line (DSL) technology; or (iv) terrestrial fixed wireless technology using an entirely licensed spectrum or a hybrid of licensed and unlicensed spectrum.
State	Refers to the State of Illinois.
Subgrantee	An entity that receives grant funds from the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 program to carry out eligible activities.
Tribal Government	The governing body of any Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, community, component band, or component reservation, individually recognized (including parenthetically) in the list published most recently as of the date of enactment of this Act pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. § 5131).
Tribal Lands	Refers to (A) any land located within the boundaries of — (i) an Indian reservation, pueblo, or rancharia; or (ii) a former reservation within Oklahoma; (B) any land not located within the boundaries of an Indian reservation, pueblo, or rancharia, the title to which is held — (i) in trust by the United States for the benefit of an Indian Tribe or an individual Indian; (ii) by an Indian Tribe or an individual Indian, subject to restriction against alienation under laws of the United States; or (iii) by a dependent Indian community; (C) any land located within a region established pursuant to section 7(a) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1606(a)); (D) Hawaiian Home Lands, as defined in section 801 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. § 4221); or (E) those areas or communities designated by the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior that are near, adjacent, or contiguous to reservations where financial assistance and social service programs are provided to Indians because of their status as Indians; and the term. A Resolution of Consent is required from each Tribal Government for broadband deployment projects in its Tribal Land.

Uniform Guidance	Refers to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR 200.
Underserved location	A broadband-serviceable location that is (a) not an unserved location, and (b) shown by the NTIA-approved challenge process dataset as lacking access to reliable broadband service with (i) a speed of 100 Mbps or above for download, (ii) a speed of 20 Mbps or above for upload, and (iii) latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.
Unserved location	A broadband-serviceable location that the NTIA-approved challenge process dataset shows as (a) having no access to broadband service, or (b) lacking access to reliable broadband service offered with (i) a speed of 25 Mbps or above for download, (ii) a speed of 3 Mbps or above for upload, and (iii) latency less than or equal to 100 milliseconds.

### II.4 Pre-Qualification Participants

Pre-Qualification participants should review the **Pre-Qualification Participation Notice letter**, which was emailed by the State to the primary and secondary contacts indicated on the Pre-Qualification submission.

As noted in the Participation Notice letter, Pre-Qualification participants are not required to resubmit materials for approved qualifications during the Pre-Qualification process *unless* the materials underlying approved qualifications have been modified, in which case applicants must submit updated materials. All Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) recipients will be required to share updated progress information in the Entity Form.

In the **Entity Form**, Pre-Qualification participants may indicate which pre-approved materials they would like the State to reference for their application.

As noted in the Participation Notice letter, the State reserves the right to re-assess the qualifications, capabilities, and resources of all prospective subgrantees based on the application-specific technical, geographical, and financial details of the actual proposed projects prior to making final awards.

### II.5 Application Platform and Response Types

The Illinois Office of Broadband is using Airtable and Smartsheet as submission platforms for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4. The application process does not require login credentials. Airtable and Smartsheet support the latest version of Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and Microsoft Edge. Applicants are advised **not** to use a mobile device or tablet.

**The submission platforms do not support applicants to save drafts and/or access previously submitted applications. As such, applicants are strongly encouraged to maintain a draft of their responses (e.g.,**

narratives) and supporting materials (e.g., attachments) to be submitted, and save the final submitted versions for future reference (e.g., for re-submission during deconfliction or subsequent Waves).

Please follow the formatting guidelines provided in this guidebook. The table below outlines the various response types.

<b>Response Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Single Select	Select the one choice that is applicable for the given question.
Multiple Select	Select all choices that are applicable for the given question.
Search and Select	Begin typing the value that you must enter (e.g., IDs). The relevant choices will be auto-searched based on the entered text. Select the choice that is applicable for the question.
Short Answer	Enter a brief text value that should not exceed one sentence. Please ensure that the value is correctly entered if a formatting standard is specified.
Numerical	Enter a numerical value, abiding by specific formatting standards to properly process the value entered.
Narrative	Enter long form text that can include rich text formatting (bolding, bullet points, etc.).
Document Upload	Upload the document(s) based on the permitted file types specified in the question. Please ensure that the file is correctly named if a naming standard is specified.
Template Upload	Upload the document(s) using the specified template as a baseline. Please ensure that the file is correctly named if a naming standard is specified. Failure to use the template will flag the submission as an invalid response.

## II.6 Confidentiality

As outlined in the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO, all information submitted is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 5 ILCS 140/1, et seq. However, if prospective subgrantees include proprietary information, they may mark it “Confidential Information.” The Department will consider any content designated as “Confidential Information” to be presumptively exempt from disclosure, pursuant to Section 7(1)(g) of FOIA.

If denoted as confidential, the information provided in the application process will be treated as trade secret information. If any party seeks to require the State, pursuant to any law, regulation, or legal process, to disclose any of the Confidential Information, the State will provide the respondent prompt notice so the applicant may seek a protective order or take other appropriate action.

## III Entity Form (Part 1)

The following section provides a detailed explanation for each component of the Entity Form. Each component has an index beginning with “E.”

Please note that applicants should only submit this form once. All applications for a given entity must be tied to the same Entity Form submission.

All information requested in this form relates to the entity submitting the response.

### III.1 Administrative: Entity Information

This section requests basic identification information for your entity.

#### **E.AD.1. Legal Entity Name**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter your legal entity name used in all company documents, including any filings with the FCC or the IRS.

#### **E.AD.2. Doing Business As (DBA)**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the name that the legal entity is doing business as (DBA).

#### **E.AD.3. Employer Identification Number (EIN)**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the nine-digit Employer Identification Number (EIN) using the format **##-#####**. If you participated in the BEAD Pre-Qualification process, please enter the exact EIN indicated on the Participation Notice Letter. Failure to enter the exact EIN may result in the qualifications approved during the Pre-Qualification process not being applied during the application process.

In the event you are applying as a multi-party applicant (e.g., public-private partnership or consortia), please provide the EIN that was used for SAM registration or, if not applicable, the EIN of the lead applicant who will be accountable for reporting to the State and ensuring that the multi-party application meets all program requirements.

**If you do not have an EIN, please contact the Illinois Office of Broadband at [broadband@illinois.gov](mailto:broadband@illinois.gov) before proceeding.**

#### **E.AD.4. Type of Entity**

**Response Type:** Single Select

Select the relevant type that best describes your entity.

1. Private/For-Profit Company or Organization

2. Public-Private Partnership
3. Public Utility, Private Utility, or Public Utility District
4. Cooperative
5. Municipality or political subdivision
6. Non-Profit Organization
7. Tribal Government
8. Consortium
9. Other

*Note: If E.AD.4. has 8. Consortium selected*

**E.AD.4A. Consortium Members – For Consortiums Only**

**Response Type:** Narrative

List all entity information, including entity types (using the answer options listed in E.AD.4), in the consortium. This list should also include the Legal Entity Name, DBA, and EIN of all members at a minimum.

*Note: If E.AD.4. has 8. Consortium selected*

**E.AD.4B. Consortium Organizational Structure – For Consortiums Only: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Elaborate on the organizational structure of the consortium, including the roles and responsibilities of each member.

*Note: If E.AD.4. has 8. Consortium selected*

**E.AD.4C. Consortium Organizational Structure – For Consortiums Only: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Please upload the underlying consortium agreement between the parties. Furthermore, upload any documents that are relevant to support the narrative for E.AD.4B.

*Note: If E.AD.4. has 8. Consortium selected*

**E.AD.4D. Consortium – For Consortiums Only: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that, pursuant to BEAD requirements for a fair, open, and competitive subgrantee selection process, you and all other members of your consortium are not part of any other multi-party entity or consortium, and you and all other members of your consortium will not apply for PAU(s) simultaneously as an individual entity and as part of a consortium?

**E.AD.4E. Anti-collusion – Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you and any representatives thereof, will not enter into any other combination, collusion, or agreement in regard to participation in the BEAD program?

## III.2 Administrative: Contact Information

This section requests basic contact information for your entity.

### **E.AD.5. Primary Contact Information**

The primary contact will be the person who receives all materials and will be contacted first if there are any questions from the Office of Broadband. Please ensure that the contact information provided can be reachable. For the email address, please ensure that any email from “@illinois.gov” or “@airtableemail.com” does not automatically move to spam in your inbox.

#### **E.AD.5.A. Primary Contact First Name**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the primary contact’s first name.

#### **E.AD.5.B. Primary Contact Last Name**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the primary contact’s last name.

#### **E.AD.5.C. Primary Contact Job Title**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the primary contact’s job title.

#### **E.AD.5.D. Primary Contact Email**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the primary contact’s email address. Please use an email address that you can access.

#### **E.AD.5.E. Primary Contact Phone Number**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the primary contact’s phone number. Please use the form (XXX) XXX-XXXX, where “X” is a number.

### **E.AD.6. Secondary Contact Information**

A secondary contact is optional but recommended in case the primary contact is unable to receive communications.

#### **E.AD.6.A. Secondary Contact First Name**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the secondary contact’s first name.

#### **E.AD.6.B. Secondary Contact Last Name**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the secondary contact’s last name.

**E.AD.6.C. Secondary Contact Job Title**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the secondary contact's job title.

**E.AD.6.D. Secondary Contact Email**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the secondary contact's email address. Please enter an email address that you can access.

**E.AD.6.E. Secondary Contact Phone Number**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please enter the secondary contact's phone number. Please use form (XXX) XXX-XXXX, where "X" is a number.

### III.3 Administrative: Prior Connect Illinois Rounds

This section provides additional context on your previous participation in the Connect Illinois program.

**E.AD.7.A. Prior Grantee Status in Connect Illinois Rounds**

**Response type:** Multiple Select (1. Applied and was awarded; 2. Applied and was not awarded; 3. Did not apply)

Please indicate if you have participated and were awarded in Connect Illinois Rounds 1, 2, or 3.

*Note: If E.AD.7.A. has 1. Applied and was awarded OR 2. Applied and was not awarded selected*

**E.AD.7.B. Applicable Connect Illinois Round**

**Response type:** Multiple Select (Connect Illinois Round 1, Connect Illinois Round 2, Connect Illinois Round 3)

Please indicate which prior Connect Illinois Round you participated in.

### III.4 Administrative: Pre-Qualifications Process

This section (other than E.AD.8.A.) is only for participants of the Pre-Qualification process.

**E.AD.8.A. Pre-Qualification Process Participation**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Did you participate in the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 Pre-Qualification process?

*Note: If E.AD.8.A. is Yes*

**E.AD.8.B. Pre-Qualification Participant ID**

**Response Type:** Search and Select

Please enter the PPQ ID from the Participation Notice Letter provided by the Illinois Office of Broadband. This Participation Notice Letter contains a Pre-Qualification Participant ID (starting with PPQ), which will connect your approved qualifications to this submission.

***Please double-check this is correctly entered before proceeding.*** Failure to enter the valid ID may result in your application not being considered during this Wave.

**Note:** *If E.AD.8.A. is Yes*

**E.AD.8.C. Pre-Qualification Approved Qualifications**

**Response Type:** Multiple Select, corresponding to each Pre-Qualification index

Using the Pre-Qualification Participation Notice Letter, select all qualifications below that have been denoted “APPROVED” on the Pre-Qualification Participation Notice Letter. This will hide all qualifications for which you have been approved. If materials need to be updated, even if a qualification is approved, do not select the qualification in the list.

Note: You are responsible for cross-checking and confirming the selected qualifications are accurate and correct. Failure to submit all qualifications required in this form, either by carrying over your pre-approved qualifications or by submitting new materials for review, may result in your application not being considered during this Wave.



## III.5 Part A: Financial Capabilities

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with BEAD requirements on financial capabilities for subgrantees deploying network facilities (BEAD NOFO, pages 72-73). Note, A3 from the Pre-Qualification phase has been updated and incorporated into the Project Form to reflect requirements at this stage of the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 process.

### **E.A1.A. Financial qualification: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you are financially qualified to meet the obligations associated with the application you intend to submit?

### **E.A1.B. Sufficient funds: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will have funds available for all project costs that exceed the grant amount?

### **E.A1.C. Compliance: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will comply with all grant requirements, including service milestones to be determined by the State?

### **E.A2.A. Evidence of Sufficient Funding: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide a narrative that explains the source(s) of funding to cover the potential matching contribution for all applications that you plan to submit.

### **E.A2.B. Evidence of Sufficient Funding: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Please upload any evidence to support the narrative provided in E.A2.A. (e.g., cash on the balance sheet, credit lines, equity commitments, etc.).

### **E.A2.C. Evidence of Sufficient Funding: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will have and will continue to have sufficient financial resources to cover your eligible costs for the Project until such time as the State authorizes additional disbursements (i.e., upon completion of milestones)?

### **E.A4. Financial Statements: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX)

Provide financial statements from the prior fiscal year that have been audited by an independent, certified public accountant.

If the applicant has not been audited during the ordinary course of business, the applicant must submit unaudited financial statements from the prior fiscal year, and certify that it will provide financial statements from the prior fiscal year that are audited by an independent certified public accountant as soon as it is made available and no later than 90 days following provisional award notification.

Provisional winners may be asked for FY2024 financial statements before finalizing awards.

If applying as a consortium, each participant in the consortium must upload audited financial statements from the prior fiscal year that have been audited by an independent, certified public accountant. If any participant of the consortium has not been audited during the ordinary course of business, the participant must submit unaudited financial statements from the prior fiscal year, and certify that it will provide financial statements from the prior fiscal year that are audited by an independent certified public accountant as soon as it is made available and no later than 90 days following provisional award notification.

**E.A4.A. Financial Statements: Unaudited Financial Statements**

**Response Type:** Single select (Yes/No)

Click Yes below if the above financial statement is **not** audited.

*Note: If E.A4.A. is Yes*

**E.A4.B. Financial Statements: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will provide financial statements from the prior fiscal year that are audited by an independent, certified public accountant within 90-days of provisional award notification?

## III.6 Part B: Managerial Capabilities

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with BEAD requirements on managerial capabilities for subgrantees deploying network facilities (BEAD NOFO, pages 73-74).

### **E.B1. Résumés: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF)

Provide 5-7 résumés for essential financial, technical, and managerial personnel who will support project implementation. Résumés should include educational experience, detailed descriptions of work history, and all relevant experience in undertaking projects of similar size and scope.

### **E.B2.A. Organizational chart(s): Personnel Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Provide a personnel organizational chart that includes all relevant personnel who will support project implementation. Names and titles should be clearly identified for all positions.

### **E.B2.B. Organizational chart(s): Entity Structure Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Provide company structure organizational chart(s) detailing all parent companies, subsidiaries, and affiliates.

If relevant, prospective subgrantees should also provide a narrative on upcoming organizational changes, including mergers, acquisitions, and organizational policies.

### **E.B3. Managerial Readiness: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide a narrative of managerial readiness to manage a broadband services network. This narrative should describe the experience and qualifications of key management for undertaking this project, its experience undertaking projects of similar size and scope, recent and upcoming organizational changes including mergers and acquisitions, and relevant organizational policies.

## III.7 Part C: Technical Capabilities

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with BEAD requirements on technical capabilities for subgrantees deploying network facilities (BEAD NOFO, page 74).

### **E.C1.A. Technical Qualifications: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please explain how you are technically qualified to complete and operate the project and are capable of carrying out the funded activities competently.

Prospective subgrantees must provide a narrative that explains how they will retain the technical expertise needed to successfully complete the project.

### **E.C1.B. Technical Qualifications: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Please upload any evidence to support the narrative provided in E.C1.A. Examples may include endorsements from current and prior partners on the technical capabilities of the applicant, or certifications from reputable institutions held by technical staff (e.g., Professional Engineer certification, fiber optic installer certification, PMP certification).

### **E.C1.C. Technical Qualifications: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you are technically qualified to complete and operate the project you propose?

### **E.C2. Appropriately Skilled and Credentialed Workforce: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will use an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce?

## III.8 Part D: Compliance with Law

This section requests information about your entity to meet BEAD requirements on compliance with all applicable Federal, State, Territorial, and local laws for subgrantees deploying network facilities (BEAD NOFO, page 74).

### **E.D1.A. History of Compliance: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you are in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws for previous broadband projects in the last three years?

Prospective subgrantees must either certify that they are in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws for previous broadband projects in the last three years, or disclose any instances of past violations.

*Note: If E.D1.A. is no*

### **E.D1.B. History of Compliance: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Submit documentation of all your past and current violations in the last three years and mitigating actions taken.

*Note: Mandatory regardless of E.D1.A. response*

#### **E.D1.B.1. History of Compliance: Certification of disclosure**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Have you disclosed all instances in which you, your contractors, or your subcontractors violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years?

Please select “No” if there are additional disclosures to be made that have not been covered in the response above for E.D1.A and E.D1.B or, if pre-qualified, for D1 (History of Compliance).

*Note: If E.D1.B.1 is “No”*

#### **E.D1.B.2. History of Compliance: Certification of disclosure – Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please disclose any instances in which you, your contractors, or your subcontractors violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.

### **E.D1.C. History of Compliance: (Sub)contractor**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Have you used contractors or subcontractors in the past three years?

*Note: If E.D1.C. is Yes*

**E.D1.D1. History of Compliance: (Sub)contractor Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide an example of your historical use of (sub)contractors, which should include staffing plans and the (sub)contractor’s past performance in the context of a similar project.

Per the BEAD NOFO, all prospective subgrantees must provide information on their record of compliance with federal labor and employment laws, as well as the records of any other entities that will participate in the project, including contractors and subcontractors.

This information must include, at a minimum, information on these entities’ compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband deployment projects in the last three years. The prospective subgrantee should share information on its historical use of contracting and subcontracting arrangements, including staffing plans, and at least one example of each contractor and subcontractor’s past performance in the context of a similar project.<sup>3</sup>

The State is seeking, among others:

- A detailed narrative of how the applicant ensures (sub)contractors are aware of related laws and regulations
- History of violations among past (sub)contractors and steps taken by applicant to mitigate these violations
- Accountability steps taken by the applicant (e.g., audits) to ensure compliance among (sub)contractors
- Steps taken to maintain orderly records of compliance / monitoring

*Note: If E.D1.C. is Yes*

**E.D1.D2. History of Compliance: (Sub)contractor Documentation**

**Response Type:** Attachment (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Submit documentation that supports the narrative submitted above. Examples may include but are not limited to trainings, communications, audit reports, and records of compliance and monitoring.

**E.D2.A. Commitment to comply with all laws: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Describe the established processes, procedures, or protocols that you have in place to ensure continued compliance during the project (such as procurement, environmental, preservation, and labor).

**E.D2.B. Commitment to comply with all laws: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

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<sup>3</sup> For details, refer to BEAD NOFO, page 56.

Please upload any evidence to support the narrative provided in E.D2.A. Examples may include but are not limited to trainings, documentation regarding legal guardrails, compliance tools, or others.

**E.D2.C. Commitment to comply with all laws: Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA) Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will comply with all applicable Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA) requirements?

**E.D2.D. Commitment to comply with all laws: Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you have reviewed NTIA guidance (available [here](#)) on requirements pertaining to Environmental and Historical Preservation (EHP) requirements, and certify that you will comply with all applicable EHP requirements?

**E.D2.E. Commitment to comply with all laws: Prevailing Wage Act Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will comply with the Davis-Bacon Act, where applicable, and the requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act (820 ILCS 130/0.01 et seq.)?

**E.D2.F. Commitment to comply with all laws: Illinois Works Apprenticeship Initiative Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will comply with the Illinois Works Apprenticeship Initiative?

**E.D2.G. Commitment to comply with all laws: Employment of Illinois Workers on Public Workers Act Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will comply with the Employment of Illinois Workers on Public Works Act (30 ILCS 570/0.01 et seq.)?

**E.D2.H. Commitment to comply with all laws: Non-Discrimination Requirement Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will abide by the non-discrimination requirements set forth in the legal authorities stipulated in the BEAD NOFO and the State of Illinois's NOFO, to the extent applicable, and acknowledge that failure to do so may result in cancellation of any award and/or recoupment of funds already disbursed?

**E.D2.I. Commitment to comply with all laws: Lower Tier Participant Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you agree to comply with the Lower Tier Participant Certification provided in pages 78-80 of the [BEAD NOFO](#) and agree to comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Parts 180, 1200 and 1326?

The Lower Tier Participant Certification can also be found in Appendix 1 of this Guidebook. Under these mandatory federal requirements, all entities receiving BEAD funds as part of a deployment effort must comply with the provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 1326 (Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension), which generally prohibit entities that have been debarred, suspended, or voluntarily excluded from participating in Federal non-procurement transactions either through primary or lower tier covered transactions, and which set forth the responsibilities of recipients of Federal financial assistance regarding transactions with other persons, including not only "lead" subgrantees but also sub-subrecipients and contractors.

**E.D3.A. Occupational safety and health requirements: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Describe your organizational policies related to safety and health requirements and how they are / will be implemented, including relevant training programs in place. This must include a description of how you will ensure the implementation of workplace safety committees that are authorized to raise health and safety concerns related to the delivery of deployment projects.

**E.D3.B. Occupational safety and health requirements: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Please upload any evidence to support the narrative provided in E.D3.A. Evidence could include schedules, modules, or training materials.



## III.9 Part E: Operational Capabilities

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with BEAD requirements on operational capabilities for subgrantees deploying network facilities (BEAD NOFO, pages 74-75).

### E.E1. Years of Service

**Response Type:** Single Select

Have you (or are you a wholly owned subsidiary of an entity which) operated a voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution service for at least two consecutive years prior to the date of your application?

1. Yes - Provided Voice and/or Broadband Service for at least two consecutive years
2. Yes - Provided Only Electric Transmission or Distribution Service for at least two consecutive years
3. No - Have not provided voice/broadband/electric service for at least two consecutive years

*Note: If the answer to E.E1. is Yes (either 1. Yes - Provided Voice and/or Broadband Service for at least two consecutive years or 2. Yes - Provided Only Electric Transmission or Distribution Service for at least two consecutive years)*

#### E.E1.A. Voice and/or Broadband Service: Certification

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you have provided a voice, broadband, and/or electric transmission or distribution service for at least two consecutive years prior to the date of your application or that you are a wholly owned subsidiary of such an entity?

*Note: If the answer to E.E1. is Yes (either 1. Yes - Provided Voice and/or Broadband Service for at least two consecutive years or 2. Yes - Provided Only Electric Transmission or Distribution Service for at least two consecutive years)*

#### E.E1.A.1. Number of Years of Service

**Response Type:** Numerical

Enter the number of years you or your parent company have been operating. Entities that are wholly owned subsidiaries of such an entity must submit a certification that attests to these facts and specifies the number of years in which the prospective subgrantee or its parent company has been operating.

*Note: If E.E1. is (1. Yes - Provided Voice and/or Broadband Service for at least two consecutive years)*

#### E.E2.A. Timely FCC Submission: Certification

**Response Type:** Single select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you have timely filed the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC" or "Commission") Form 477 and the Broadband DATA Act submission, if applicable, as required during this period and otherwise have complied with the Commission's rules and regulations?

*Note: If E.E1. is (1. Yes - Provided Voice and/or Broadband Service for at least two consecutive years)*

**E.E2.A.1. Timely FCC Submission: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Provide evidence that the Federal Communication Commissions' Form 477 and Broadband DATA Act Submissions were filed on time as required during this time period of operation specified in E.E1.A.1. Prospective subgrantees should upload email confirmations or screenshotted verifications.

*Note: If E.E1. is (1. Yes - Provided Voice and/or Broadband Service for at least two consecutive years)*

**E.E2.B. Timely FCC Submissions – Compliance**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Have you ever received an enforcement action, civil litigation, or other matter in which you failed to comply or alleged to have failed to comply with the FCC rules or regulations?

*Note: If E.E2.B. is yes*

**E.E2.C. Timely FCC Submissions - Compliance: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Explain any pending or completed enforcement action, civil litigation, or other matter in which you failed to comply or were alleged to have failed to comply with the FCC's rules or regulations.

*Note: If E.E1. is (2. Yes - Provided Only Electric Transmission or Distribution Service for at least two consecutive years)*

**E.E3. Timely Submission to Relevant Entities: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Provide evidence that qualified operating or financial reports were filed on time with the relevant financial institutions, as well as a copy of the submitted reports.

Acceptable submissions for this purpose are the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Form 7, Financial and Operating Report Electric Distribution; the RUS Form 12, Financial and Operating Report Electric Power Supply; the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Form 7, Financial and Statistical Report; the CFC Form 12, Operating Report; the CoBank Form 7; or the functional replacement of one of these reports. See Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Order, 35 FCC Rcd at 719, n. 202.

*Note: If E.E1. is (2. Yes - Provided Only Electric Transmission or Distribution Service for at least two consecutive years)*

**E.E3.A. Timely Submission to Relevant Entities: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that the operating or financial reports you provided are true and accurate copies of the reports that were provided to the relevant financial institution(s)?

*Note: If E.E1. is (3. No - Have not provided voice/broadband/electric service for at least two consecutive years)*

**E.E4.A. Operational Capabilities: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Describe how the newly formed entity has obtained, through internal or external resources, sufficient operational capabilities.

*Note: If E.E1. is (3. No - Have not provided voice/broadband/electric service for at least two consecutive years)*

**E.E4.B. Operational Capabilities: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Please upload any evidence to support the narrative provided in E.E4.A. Acceptable evidence may include résumés from key personnel; project descriptions and narratives from contractors, subcontractors, or other partners with relevant operational experience; or other comparable evidence.

**E.E5. Operational Capabilities: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you possess the operational capability to complete and operate the Project you are proposing in your application?

## III.10 Part F: Ownership Capabilities

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with BEAD requirements on ownership capabilities for subgrantees deploying network facilities (BEAD NOFO, page 75).

### **E.F1.A. Ownership information with the requirements set forth in 47 C.F.R. 1.2112(a)(1)-(7): Template Response Type: Document Upload**

Please upload the completed [template](#) to disclose relevant ownership information consistent with the requirements set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 1.2112(a)(1)-(7)<sup>4</sup>. Please follow the guidance provided in the template to ensure it is completed in line with State requirements. If you are a consortium, please include details for each participant in the consortium.

Requirements set forth in 47 CFR § 1.2112(a)(1)-(7):

1. List the real party or parties in interest in the applicant or application, including a complete disclosure of the identity and relationship of those persons or entities directly or indirectly owning or controlling (or both) the applicant;
2. List the name, address, and citizenship of any party holding 10 percent or more of stock in the applicant, whether voting or nonvoting, common or preferred, including the specific amount of the interest or percentage held;
3. List, in the case of a limited partnership, the name, address and citizenship of each limited partner whose interest in the applicant is 10 percent or greater (as calculated according to the percentage of equity paid in or the percentage of distribution of profits and losses);
4. List, in the case of a general partnership, the name, address and citizenship of each partner, and the share or interest participation in the partnership;
5. List, in the case of a limited liability company, the name, address, and citizenship of each of its members whose interest in the applicant is 10 percent or greater;
6. List all parties holding indirect ownership interests in the applicant as determined by successive multiplication of the ownership percentages for each link in the vertical ownership chain, that equals 10 percent or more of the applicant, except that if the ownership percentage for an interest in any link in the chain exceeds 50 percent or represents actual control, it shall be treated and reported as if it were a 100 percent interest; and
7. List any FCC-regulated entity or applicant for an FCC license, in which the applicant or any of the parties identified in paragraphs (a)(1) through (a)(5) of this section, owns 10 percent or more of stock, whether voting or nonvoting, common or preferred. This list must include a description of each such entity's principal business and a description of each such entity's relationship to the applicant (e.g., Company A owns 10 percent of Company B (the applicant) and 10 percent of

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<sup>4</sup> [Title 47](#), Code of Federal Regulations

Company C, then Companies A and C must be listed on Company B's application, where C is an FCC licensee and/or license applicant).

**E.F1.B. Ownership Information: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Attach any files relevant to the above template upload for E.F1.A.

### III.11 Part G: Other Public Funding

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with BEAD requirements on other public funding for subgrantees deploying network facilities (BEAD NOFO, pages 75-76).

#### E.G1. Lack of Federal Debarment

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Have you ever been federally debarred?

#### E.G2. Previous History of Incomplete Projects

**Response:** Multiple choice

Have any of your publicly funded awards issued in the past five years experienced the following:

- Suspension
- Termination
- Rescission
- Non-completion
- None of the above

*Note: If E.G2. is Suspension, Termination, Rescission, or Non-completion*

#### E.G2.A. Previous History of Incomplete Projects: Narrative

**Response:** Narrative

Please list all publicly funded awards issued in the last five years that have been suspended, terminated, rescinded, or not completed. For each, explain the cause.

#### E.G3./G4.A. Other broadband projects in the State of Illinois

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Please indicate Yes below if there are any broadband deployment projects using federal funds in the State of Illinois at the time of this application that you or your affiliates (i) have submitted or plan to submit any application for, and/or (ii) are undertaking or have committed to undertake.

#### E.G4.B. Rural Digital Opportunity Fund projects in State of Illinois

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Please indicate Yes below if there are any broadband deployment projects using **Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF)** funds in the State of Illinois at the time of this application that you or your affiliates are undertaking or have committed to undertake.

*Note: If E.G3./G4.A. is Yes, OR E.G4.B. is Yes*

#### E.G3./G4. Disclosure of other broadband projects and federal broadband awards in the State of Illinois: Template

**Response Type:** Template Document Upload (Permitted file types: XLSX)

Please upload the completed Existing Broadband Projects Template (available [here](#)) to disclose any application you or your affiliates have submitted or plan to submit, and every broadband deployment project that you or your affiliates are undertaking or have committed to undertake in the State of Illinois (G3). Additionally, please use the same template to disclose any updates on the progress to date on any RDOF and CAFII support for eligible locations (G4).

The State may request additional information from the prospective subgrantee to better understand the status of these projects.

If you have submitted this template during the Pre-Qualification process and updates have occurred since that submission, please report any updates by resubmitting this document.

If you are an RDOF participant who has been pre-qualified for G3/G4, please provide an updated template that includes updates since your pre-qualification submission. If no changes have occurred in CAFII and/or other broadband projects, please write "N/A" in the first cells for the respective row / tab.

*Note: If E.G4.B. is Yes*

**E.G4.C. RDOF projects in State of Illinois: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please include a narrative describing your progress against your RDOF award, which must include the following:

- i. A detailed timeline, including key phases and deliveries, of your deployment plan leading up to your next RDOF milestone.
- ii. Description of resources that you have dedicated to your next deployment milestone, and how you have structured your workforce and technology strategies to meet this specific goal.
- iii. Progress you have made to date in pre-deployment steps, such as design and securing permits, and a list of the permits and easements you have obtained or filed for/requested, along with the date of file/request.
- iv. Description of biggest challenges you anticipate in meeting your next deployment milestone, and contingency plans you have in place to address potential delays or obstacles.

*Note: If E.G4.B. is Yes*

**E.G4.D. RDOF projects in State of Illinois: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Attach any files relevant to the above narrative E.G4.C.

## III.12 Part H: Risk Management

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with BEAD requirements on risk management (BEAD NOFO, pages 70-71).

### E.H1. Cybersecurity Risk Management Plan: Certification

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you attest that:

1. You have a cybersecurity risk management plan (the plan) in place that is either (a) operational, if you are providing service prior to the award of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized upon providing service, if you are not yet providing service prior to the grant award;
2. The plan reflects the latest version of the [National Institute of Standards and Technology \(NIST\) Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity](#) (currently Version 1.1) and the standards and controls set forth in Executive Order 14028 and specifies the security and privacy controls being implemented;
3. The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and
4. The plan will be submitted to the State prior to the allocation of funds?

Please note, to the extent that you rely in whole or in part on network facilities owned or operated by a third party (e.g., purchases of wholesale carriage on such facilities), the above attestation must be obtained from your network provider.

### E.H2. Supply Chain Risk Management Plan: Certification

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you attest that:

1. You have a Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM) plan in place that is either: (a) operational, if you are already providing service at the time of the grant; or (b) ready to be operationalized, if you are not yet providing service at the time of the grant award;
2. The plan is based upon the key practices discussed in the NIST publication NISTIR 8276, "[Key Practices in Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Observations from Industry](#)," and related SCRM guidance from NIST, including NIST 800-161, "[Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management Practices for Systems and Organizations](#)," and specifies the supply chain risk management controls being implemented;
3. The plan will be reevaluated and updated on a periodic basis and as events warrant; and
4. The plan will be submitted to the State prior to the allocation of funds?

Please note, to the extent that you rely in whole or in part on network facilities owned or operated by a third party (e.g., purchases of wholesale carriage on such facilities), the above attestation must be obtained from your network provider.



### III.13 Part I: Regulatory Information

This section requests information about your entity to demonstrate compliance with State requirements on regulatory information.

#### E.I1. Mandatory Disclosure Form: Template

**Response Type:** Template Document Upload (Permitted file type: PDF, JPEG, PNG)

Upload the completed, dated, and signed [Mandatory Disclosure Form](#).

#### E.I2. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form: Template

**Response Type:** Template Document Upload (Permitted file type: PDF, JPEG, PNG)

Upload the completed, dated, and signed [Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form](#).

#### E.I3. W-9 Form: Template

**Response Type:** Template Document Upload (Permitted file type: PDF, JPEG, PNG)

Upload the completed, dated, and signed [W-9 Form](#).

#### E.I4. GATA Registration

**Response Type:** Single select (Yes/No)

Please click below to confirm that you have registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal (<https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>).

Note that GATA registration at the time of grant application is a **mandatory prerequisite** for all State grants. Failure to do so may result in your application not being considered for BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 awards. This is **not** equivalent to participation in the BEAD Pre-Qualification process.

### III.14 Next Steps after Submission

Response Type: Single Select (Yes)

Upon completion of this form, the contact emails provided in E.AD.5. and E.AD.6. will receive an Entity Form Submission ID (EFS) via email. Please keep this for your records and enter this ID for **Part 2. Project Form** on Airtable and **Part 3. Application Form** on Smartsheet.

Please note that the submission of the Entity Form does not constitute full completion of the application. Only after all three parts have been completed will an application be considered complete.

**Please indicate your understanding below.**

“I understand that, to formally complete my application for BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, I must complete the Project Form on Airtable, and then submit an Application Form on Smartsheet with the Entity Form Submission ID and Project Form Submission ID.”

## IV Project Form (Part 2)

This application form is **part 2 of the submission process** for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4. **Prior to starting this form, please ensure that the Entity Form has been completed for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, as the EFS ID is required to submit this form (P.AD.2).**

The Project Form requests materials to demonstrate that the applicant's project meets BEAD qualifications, and materials that will be considered in the Merit Review Scoring Process.

- This form begins with all qualification materials (all sections except Section S). Qualifications are materials that must be satisfactorily completed for the application to be considered for BEAD funding per NTIA and State requirements. Some of these materials may be leveraged for scoring purposes (see below).
- Section S contains all additional information not collected as part of the qualification materials above that will be used in the Merit Review Scoring Process. Information regarding the scoring criteria for BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 is available in the NOFO and [Initial Proposal, Volume II](#).

Applicants must submit this form for each project application they intend to submit for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4. The following section provides a detailed explanation for each component of the Project Form. Each component has an index beginning with "P."

## IV.1 Administrative: Project and Associated Entity Information

This section requests project-specific information and the associated entity's information.

### **P.AD.1. Project Name**

**Response type:** Short Answer

Please enter the project name. Project names must follow a specific format of [EIN] – [Project number in two digits] (e.g., for EIN 12-3456789's third project application, enter 12-3456789-03).

For the EIN, in the event you are applying as a multi-party applicant (e.g., public-private partnership or consortia), please provide the EIN that was used for SAM registration or, if not applicable, the EIN of the lead applicant who will be accountable for reporting to the State and ensuring that all requirements are met for the multi-party application.

For the project number, should you have fewer than 10 projects you are applying for, please add a 0 to ensure it is 2 characters (i.e., "09" instead of "9"). In the event you are applying as a multi-party applicant, please add a letter "C" at the end. For instance, if this is the second project application you are submitting as a multi-party applicant, please denote "02C".

Applications do not need to be submitted in the same order as the two-digit project number at the end of the project name.

### **P.AD.2. Entity Form Submission ID**

**Response type:** Search and Select

Enter the Entity Form Submission ID emailed to the applicants designated contact(s) after completing the Entity Form submission.

Before continuing with this form, the Entity Form for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 must be completed. The Submission ID is in the format of "EFS-#####" The contact information entered in the Entity Form submission will receive a confirmation email upon submission of this form.

*Please double-check that this ID is correct before proceeding.* Failure to enter the correct EFS ID will result in your application being tied to the wrong entity.

Please note, as specified in the Entity Form, that each entity should submit the Entity Form only once, and that Submission ID will be applied across all Project Form submissions here. That is, the same Entity Form Submission ID should be used multiple times for each and every Project Form submission from your entity for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4.

### **P.AD.3. Employer Identification Number (EIN)**

**Response type:** Short Answer

Please enter the exact EIN you submitted for your Entity Form. Please use the format ##-#####.

Failure to enter the exact EIN may result in your submission being incomplete and subsequently rejected or require resubmission of the entire form.

**P.AD.4. Primary Contact Email Address**

**Response type:** Short Answer

Please enter the primary contact email submitted in the Entity Form for your entity. This is available in the Entity Form confirmation email.

Confirmation of this form submission will be sent to the primary and secondary contacts identified in the Entity Form, as well as any subsequent communication as needed.

## IV.2 Administrative: Submission Type

This section requests information on whether the given submission is an original first-time submission for the given Wave, or a re-submission per State request for deconfliction.

**P.AD.5. Type of Submission**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Original Submission, Deconflicted Resubmission)

This form solicits information for project submissions throughout a given Wave. Below, select "Original Submission," unless you are resubmitting a project application due to deconfliction per State request. If you are resubmitting your application due to deconfliction per State request, please select "Deconflicted Resubmission."

*Note: If P.AD.5. is Deconflicted Resubmission*

**P.AD.5A. Original Submission ID**

**Response Type:** Dynamically Linked Single Select

Please select the original submission that you are resubmitting a deconflicted application for.

In the form below, please **ONLY** submit materials that require updates from your originally submitted application. Certain questions will be required to ensure the State captures relevant information to evaluate your resubmission. All other questions will be optional, and the State will assume all previously submitted materials to be applicable to the deconflicted resubmission unless updated materials have been provided.

**The applicant is responsible for reporting any updates as needed for the State to evaluate an updated, accurate application, and should the State later identify discrepancies, the State will take remedial action including but not limited to revocation of award selections.**

## IV.3 Part A: Project Overview and Locations Impacted

This section of the application requests an overview of the project and locations impacted by the proposed broadband project.

### P.A1. Project Overview: Narrative

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please provide a high-level, introductory overview of the project. Please include a summary description of the project scope (e.g., geographic area, count of BSLs/CAIs to be served, technology); project budget, funds requested, and match provided; estimated time needed for start of deployment activities; and estimated time for deployment completion. Please be advised that this narrative may be publicly used in announcements following any awards made, if applicable.

### P.A2. Project Area Selection Sheet: Template

**Response Type:** Template Document (XLSX)

Please upload **BOTH** of the following:

- The **Project Area Selection Sheet for this project** ([found here](#)), which must be populated with the Project Area Export from the [BEAD Project Area Selection Tool](#). Details on how to complete the template can be found in the “Connect IL Rd 4 – Instructions” tab of the template.
- The **original, unaltered Project Area Export file** (.csv) from the [BEAD Project Area Selection Tool](#), used to populate the template above.

Please ensure the files are named in the following structure: “[PROJECT NAME]\_ProjectArea.xlsx” and “[PROJECT NAME]\_ProjectAreaExport.csv”. For example, if the project was named in P.AD.1. as 12-3456789-03, the files should be named “12-3456789-03\_ProjectArea.xlsx” and “12-3456789-03\_ProjectAreaExport.csv”, respectively.

### P.A2.A. Locations that are Not Unserved, Underserved, or Eligible CAIs

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Please indicate whether the proposed project area in the Project Area Selection Sheet submitted above includes locations that are not unserved, underserved, or eligible CAIs. Note, a proposed project may only contain up to 20% of such locations.

*Note: If P.A2.A. is Yes*

### P.A2.B Locations that are Not Unserved, Underserved, or Eligible CAIs: Narrative

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please include a narrative demonstrating how including these locations is necessary for the proposed project. Locations that are not unserved, underserved, or eligible CAIs should only be included if they are incidental toward targeting the unserved and/or underserved locations (e.g., wireline network must bypass such locations in order to reach the unserved and/or underserved location and/or the eligible CAIs; wireless network covers the locations because the RF signal permeates to such locations).

Please note that a Proposed Project Area is only eligible if at least 80% of the BSLs in the Project Area are unserved or underserved locations, or eligible CAIs.

**P.A3. Notifying New Offerings to Customers: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide a description of how you intend to notify populations of new or newly upgraded offerings in the project area. This proposal should be designed in a manner that reflects any unique needs of the specific demographics of the area (including, for example, languages prominently spoken in the area and the best means of ensuring that the population is likely to encounter the applicant’s public notice).

Per BEAD requirements, to increase broadband adoption, BEAD subgrantees must carry out public awareness campaigns in their service areas that are designed to highlight the value of broadband service, and provide a public notice to residents once the Funded Network has been deployed. Awareness campaigns must include information about low-cost service plans and any federal subsidies for low-income households such as the Lifeline Program, the Affordable Connectivity Program, and any successor programs. Further, awareness campaigns must be conducted in an equitable and nondiscriminatory manner. Subgrantees must utilize a variety of communications media (e.g., online, print, radio) and provide information in languages other than English when warranted based on the demographics of the community. Each subgrantee must also share with the State the public notice provided to inform individuals residing in the locations to which broadband service has been provided.

**P.A4. Project Technology Type**

**Response Type:** Multiple choice

Please indicate which technologies will be used in the project. Note, if multiple technology types will be used in the project, please select *all* applicable technologies. Also, certain technologies (e.g., Geostationary Satellite) are not considered eligible for BEAD funding per NTIA guidance.

Options include:

- Fiber-optic
- Coaxial cable / HFC
- Licensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless
- Licensed by-Rule Terrestrial Fixed Wireless
- Unlicensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless
- Copper Wire
- Non-geostationary Satellite (e.g., Low Earth Orbit Satellite)
- Other alternative technology.

*Note: If P.A4. is “Other alternative technology”*

**P.A4.A. Project Technology Type – Other alternative technology**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Please indicate which alternative technologies will be used for your project.

**P.A4.B. Project Technology Type: Same Technology Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will not submit multiple applications under the same technology type for any given PAU?

**P.A5. Tribal Locations**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Does your project include broadband-serviceable locations (BSLs) in Federally Recognized Tribal Nation land?

Please note, PAU ID 48\_17037 includes a BSL in the Federally Recognized Tribal Nation land of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

*Note: If Yes in P.A5.*

**P.A5.A. Tribal Locations: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will submit a Resolution of Consent from each Tribal Government, from the Tribal Council or other governing body, upon whose Tribal Lands the infrastructure will be deployed?



## IV.4 Part B: Technical Project-Based Qualifications

This section of the application focuses on the technical design aspects of the proposed broadband project. Applicants must provide a project design and other supporting materials demonstrating the capability to provide broadband service meeting or exceeding the BEAD program requirements. The project design materials must be certified by a currently licensed professional engineer. The project design materials must include the components listed below.

### **P.B1. Detailed Project Schedule: Template**

**Response Type:** Template Document (XLSX)

Please provide a detailed project implementation schedule, including buildout timeline and milestones, using the [template](#) provided. This document must be accompanied by a certification from a Professional Engineer.

The applicant must provide a project timeline that articulates its ability to complete the project within the four-year timeframe. The timeline must include the key milestones for project implementation:

- **Detailed Project Planning:** Includes the creation of a detailed project budget and schedule as an addendum to the executed subgrant agreement.
- **Network Design:** Includes all design engineering work resulting in sufficient documentation to construct, provision, and permit the proposed network deployment.
- **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) / National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Assessment:** Includes the preparation, submission, processing, and approval of all environmental requirements for the proposed network deployment.
- **Permitting:** Includes the preparation, submission, processing, and approval of all required permitting for the proposed network deployment.
- **Make Ready:** Includes the application preparation, submission, pole owner processing, and all make-ready construction of utility poles for the proposed network deployment (if applicable).
- **Material & Equipment Procurement:** Includes all procurement processes for contracting project material vendors. Completed when the applicant has received delivery of all construction materials, equipment, and network electronics.
- **Contracts Signed for Contractors:** Includes all procurement processes for engaging project contractors. Completed when the applicant has obtained signed contracts of all required contractors to complete the proposed project.
- **Network Deployment (Construction):** Includes the construction, installation, and provisioning of all network components required for the applicant to provide service to the project's locations.
- **Project Locations passed:** The month in which the applicant anticipates reaching the 10% / 20% / 30% / 40% / 50% / 60% / 70% / 80% / 90% / 100% completion milestones and will request reimbursement from the State.

- **Subscriber Activations:** Includes the construction of service drops and the installation / activation of CPE at individual subscriber locations, initiated upon individual customer sign-up. Please note that Subscriber Activations are **NOT** included in the four-year Project Completion Period.
- **Program Closeout Submission:** Represents the month in which the applicant proposes to complete the project by submitting the required closeout materials to the State.

Applicants must use the [template](#) provided by the State. Detailed instructions on how to populate the form can be found on the “Instructions” tab of the template.

Please ensure that the project duration as shown in **Cell AJ4 of the “Timeline” tab** accurately reflects the length of your project, as this figure will be reviewed against the Scoring Criteria “Speed to Deployment.”

Please name the file using the following naming convention: “[PROJECT NAME]\_Project Schedule.xlsx”. For example, if the project was named in P.AD.1 as 12-3456789-03, it should be named “12-3456789-03\_Project Schedule.xlsx.”

## **P.B2. Network Design and Technical Narrative**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Shapefile [.shp, .shx, .dbf], .kml, .kmz, .zip, .tar, PDF)

**Please provide a technical narrative and network design that support the proposed design.** Both documents must be accompanied by a certification from a Professional Engineer.

### **Technical Narrative**

**File Format:** PDF

**Description:** Details how the proposed infrastructure will deliver service that reliably meets or exceeds the program required speeds for all proposed BSLs in the project area.

Narrative must include:

- Detailed description of the proposed project’s technical specifications and design. Please include:
  - For Priority Broadband Projects:
    - The total proposed miles of fiber, split out by (i) miles of buried fiber to be deployed (ii) miles of aerial fiber to be deployed;
    - The technology types to be deployed (XGS-PON, G-PON, etc.); and
    - The highest available speeds and maximum latency to be offered by the network.
  - For non-Priority Broadband Projects:
    - The anticipated number of miles of fiber (split out by buried and aerial fiber), coaxial cable, and copper plant to provide service to the locations within the project;

- The number of towers and access points to support fixed wireless deployment;
  - The technology types to be deployed (fiber, hybrid fiber-coaxial, fixed wireless, etc.); and
  - The highest available speeds and maximum latency to be offered by the network.
- A detailed description of how the network will be connected to sufficient backhaul infrastructure to support the program performance requirements. Please include the following:
  - If the proposed network leverages backhaul infrastructure from the applicant's own existing network, describe that infrastructure and how the proposed network interconnects with it;
  - If the proposed network leverages backhaul infrastructure from another organization's existing network, describe that infrastructure, how the proposed network interconnects with it, and the terms for which the applicant will have access to the infrastructure for the life of their required service commitment; and
  - If the proposed network requires construction of new backhaul infrastructure, describe that infrastructure, how construction of the infrastructure will be funded, what steps have been taken to ensure the new infrastructure will be commissioned prior to the applicant's proposed subscriber activation dates, and how the proposed network interconnects with it.
- An explanation of the projected subscriber take rate and the anticipated level of oversubscription based on the proposed network capacity.
- A network scalability plan to meet the program performance requirements if subscriber take rate is higher than anticipated, customers subscribe to higher service level offerings than anticipated, or any other factors that may require additional network capacity.
- A detailed description of how the proposed network will be deployed using industry best practices:
  - Describe what anticipated portions of the network will be built using underground or aerial;
  - If underground construction is proposed, describe the construction methods to be used (e.g., directional drilling, trenching);
  - If aerial construction is proposed, identify the status of the utility poles the project intends to attach to (e.g., applicant has current attachments, applicant has an agreement with the pole owner in place, a pole attachment agreement needs to be obtained). Additionally, describe the construction methods to be used (e.g., new attachment, overlash of existing attachments); and
  - Describe the construction materials and equipment to be used in the network (e.g., 1.25" HDPE conduit, 144-count fiber-optic cable, brand name and product series of network electronic equipment platform) and how the selected materials support a sustainable and scalable network.

- If the project proposes to include locations that are not unserved or underserved (per P.A2.A), the exact narrative submitted demonstrating how including these locations is necessary for the proposed project.
  - Note, as outlined in P.A2.A, locations that are not unserved or underserved should only be included if they are incidental toward targeting the unserved and/or underserved locations (e.g., wireline network has to bypass such locations in order to reach the unserved and/or underserved location; wireless network covers the locations because the RF signal permeates to such locations).

### **Network Design**

**File Format:** Shapefile (all file extensions contained in a single .zip file) preferred. The shapefile format is designed to store and represent various types of geographic features, such as points, lines, and polygons, along with attribute information associated with these features. A shapefile is comprised of six separate file extensions (.CPG, .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .spx, and .shp). Shapefiles containing all six file extensions should be uploaded in a zipped folder. Note, while a shapefile is encouraged, the applicant may submit a .kmz file instead should providing a shapefile be difficult.

**Description:** The proposed network design must include all proposed unserved and underserved BSLs and CAIs to be served by the project, all proposed fiber infrastructure routes to be constructed via the project, and project area boundary polygons encompassing all infrastructure routes and BSLs. All PAUs that a prospective subgrantee applies for must be included in the proposed network design, and no other PAUs should be included. The proposed network design must also account for the full list of BSLs and CAIs exported from the Project Area Selection tool for the selected PAUs.

The **network design** must be accompanied by a certification from a Professional Engineer stating that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the performance requirements for all locations served by the project. **Please note that this network design must substantiate the speed and latency information submitted in Part S. Scoring Criteria, or the State reserves the right to adjust the relevant score, accordingly.**

The network design must include the following layers in a .shp or .kmz file:

- All Unserved BSLs in the proposed project area as point features. This layer must be named “Unserved\_BSL”. The location data must be sourced from the [Project Area Selection Tool](#).
- All Underserved BSLs in the proposed project area as point features. This layer must be named “Underserved\_BSL”. The location data must be sourced from the [Project Area Selection Tool](#).
- All CAIs in the proposed project area as point features. This layer must be named “CAI”. The location data must be sourced from the [Project Area Selection Tool](#).
- If the applicant proposes to serve any BSL not officially classified as either unserved or underserved, they must submit all locations separately as point features. This layer must be named “Other\_BSL”. The location data must map exactly to the information submitted in the Project Area Selection Template.

- The applicant’s proposed infrastructure routes, peering points, colocation facilities, fixed wireless towers (if applicable), and/or wireless access points (if applicable) as line and point features. The layers should be named “Network\_Infrastructure” in the submitted shapefiles. The submitted routes should be provided as a singular line representative of all fiber infrastructure (conduit, fiber, aerial attachments) to be placed along any individual pathway (e.g., public rights-of-way, private easements). Routes should be inclusive of all new backhaul, backbone, and distribution infrastructure.
  - Routes that will only be constructed as part of subscriber activations (drops to individual subscriber locations constructed upon customer signup), should not be included in the submitted file. The project’s estimated take rate will be captured separately within the application.
  - Routes should be attributed within the GIS files to differentiate between backhaul (middle-mile) network infrastructure and distribution network (last-mile) infrastructure. This can be provided as separate colors to identify the distinction.
  - Existing infrastructure should be attributed within the GIS files or provided as a separate color to designate it as “existing.”
- The applicant’s proposed service area(s) as polygon features. The polygon must encompass all proposed locations and proposed infrastructure routes submitted as part of the project shapefile and the layer should be labelled “Project\_Boundary” in the submitted shapefiles.

**P.B2.A. Network Design – Conduit Access: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

If your project involves laying fiber-optic cables or conduit underground or along a roadway, please provide a narrative describing how you plan to comply with BEAD requirements to include interspersed conduit access points at regular and short intervals for interconnection by unaffiliated entities.

Per the BEAD NOFO, any Funded Network deployment project that involves laying fiber-optic cables or conduit underground or along a roadway must include interspersed conduit access points at regular and short intervals for interconnection by unaffiliated entities. Where a project proposes to lay conduit, prospective subgrantees must propose to deploy a reasonable amount of excess conduit capacity and propose a conduit access point interval as part of the grant application process, and the State will consider the adequacy of the prospective subgrantee’s proposed excess conduit capacity and access points when evaluating the application.

If your proposed project does not involve laying fiber-optic cables or conduit underground or along a roadway, please write “Not applicable”.

*Note: If P.A4. is “Licensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless,” “Licensed by-Rule Terrestrial Fixed Wireless,” or “Unlicensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless”*

### **P.B2.B. Network Design – Fixed Wireless Technology: Template**

**Response Type:** Document Upload

For applications that propose any deployment of fixed wireless broadband, applicants must complete and submit the State-provided design [template](#) that includes instructions. Note that as part of completing this template, applicants must also upload here the manufacturer’s cut sheet of each antenna used in the design. This should include any tabular or plot representation of the far field radiation pattern.

The design must be certified by a Professional Engineer stating that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the performance requirements for all locations served by the project.

### **P.B3. Logical Network Diagram: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (PDF)

Please provide a logical network diagram. This document must be certified by a Professional Engineer stating that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the performance requirements for all locations served by the project. Please note that this network diagram must substantiate the speed and latency information submitted in Part S. Scoring Criteria, or the State reserves the right to adjust the relevant score, accordingly.

The network diagram must illustrate the logical connectivity for the network, depict the desired architecture of the network in terms of hardware placement, hardware redundancy, and indicate the types of network platforms or technologies to use in each layer of the network. The diagram should convey the network’s capacity to provide each proposed BSL with the required broadband speeds. Existing infrastructure present should be designated as existing on the diagram, so that newly proposed infrastructure is clearly identified. This document must be submitted in PDF format. An example of the logical network diagram can be found [here](#).

### **P.B4. Project Budget and Capital Investment Schedule: Template**

**Response Type:** Template Upload (XLSX)

**Provide the completed project budget and capital investment schedule template for the proposed project above, which must be certified by a Professional Engineer.** Applicants must use the [template](#) provided by the State. Detailed instructions on how to populate the form can be found on the “Instructions” tab of the template.

For the **project budget**, applicants must provide a project cost estimate that offers sufficient granularity to demonstrate an understanding of the proposed project and associated estimated costs. The cost estimate must include a detailed itemization of each cost and sufficient description to verify the eligibility of each cost item proposed. For each cost item, the applicant must indicate the breakdown of costs to be covered by grant funds versus provided by applicant matching funds. The applicant should only provide eligible costs within its project cost estimate.

This template also includes information required for BEAD qualification pertaining to a **capital investment schedule** that shows the complete build-out and initiation of service within four years of the date on which you will have received the award.

Please ensure the file is named in the following structure: “[PROJECT NAME]\_BudgetSheet.xlsx”. For example, if the project was named in P.AD.1 as 12-3456789-03, it should be named “12-3456789-03\_BudgetSheet.xlsx”.

**P.B5. Certification from Professional Engineer: Template**

**Response Type:** Document upload (Permitted file types: PDF, DOCX)

**Provide the signed certification from a Professional Engineer regarding the above materials.**

The applicant must obtain certification from a currently licensed Professional Engineer confirming the accuracy and completeness of the Project Plan materials and attesting, among others, that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the requisite performance requirements to all proposed locations within the required four-year deployment timeline. The Professional Engineer must sign the certification document.

Applicants must use the [template](#) provided by the State. All fields must be completed by the Professional Engineer.

Please ensure the file is named in the following structure: “[PROJECT NAME]\_PECertification.pdf”. For example, if the project was named in P.AD.1 as 12-3456789-03, it should be named “12-3456789-03\_PECertification.pdf”.

*Note: If P.A4. is only Fiber-optic*

**P.B6.A.1. BEAD-required broadband service standards – Priority Broadband Project: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that the proposed broadband project will rely entirely on fiber-optic technology to each end-user premises and will ensure that the network built by the project can easily scale speeds over time to meet the evolving connectivity needs of households and businesses and support the deployment of 5G, successor wireless technologies and other advanced services? (See Infrastructure Act § 60102(a)(2)(I).)

*Note: If P.A4. is non-Priority Reliable Broadband Project*

**P.B6.A.2. BEAD-required broadband service standards – non-Priority Broadband Project: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that the proposed broadband project will deliver qualifying broadband service as defined by the BEAD Program, and you will deliver Reliable Broadband Service (e.g., fiber, HFC, licensed fixed wireless) and will not rely on any network segment that is not compliant with Reliable Broadband Service Technology?

**P.B6.B. BEAD-required broadband technical requirements: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that at the time of project closeout, all proposed broadband serviceable locations (BSLs) will be capable of receiving Reliable Broadband Service with speeds of not less than 100 Mbps for downloads and 20 Mbps for uploads with 95% of latency measurements during testing windows falling at or below 100 milliseconds round-trip time?

**P.B6.C. Project cost estimates: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that your submitted project cost estimate is accurate and encompasses all costs to be incurred by the applicant as part of the proposed broadband project?

**P.B6.D. Timeline estimates: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that your submitted project timeline is accurate and that it will be capable of providing broadband service to each proposed broadband-serviceable location (BSL) that desires service within the committed timeframe?

**P.B6.E. Permits and approvals needed: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will obtain all necessary federal, state, and local governmental permits and required approvals necessary for the proposed work to be completed?



## IV.5 Part C: Financial Project-Based Qualifications

This section of the application focuses on the financial aspects of the proposed broadband project. Applicants are required to provide supporting materials to demonstrate project-based financial qualifications.

### **P.C1. Pro Forma to Demonstrate Project Sustainability: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (XLSX)

Please submit the pro forma analysis that substantiates the sustainability of the proposed project. Applicants can use the [template](#) provided by the State or upload their own materials as long as the submission encompasses the following information.

Please provide detailed financial forecasts for 14 years (i.e., ~4 years deployment + 10 years post-deployment), including: a) assumptions; b) balance sheet; c) income statement; d) cash flow statement; e) Net Present Value (NPV); and f) Terminal Value (TV). These financial statements should be for this project only. All numbers should be consistent with other financial information provided in the application – e.g., Project Budget, Match Amount, etc. If your project plan reflects a more timely network deployment cycle (e.g., two years), please reflect that pace in the forecast (i.e., two years of deployment and 12 years post-deployment).

Additional guidance for Net Present Value (NPV): NPV involves the present value of net cash flows taking into account all revenues, expenses, and investments. A negative NPV implies the project fails to earn its cost of capital, thereby thwarting any private investment. Please compute and follow these guidelines per Illinois Office of Broadband standards from previous Connect Illinois rounds:

- Cash flows should include operating cash flows and investments.
- Operating Cash Flows (OCF) involve all net cash flows generated from the annual operation of the project. Annual OCF equals after-tax operating income plus depreciation. Also, account for changes in current assets and current liabilities accounts (e.g., reduction in deferred revenue constitutes an increase in cash flow, and reduction in accounts receivables constitutes a decrease in cash flow).
- Investments include all upfront and recurring capital expenditures for which the applicant makes through its match-funded investment.
- Please apply a discount rate that reflects the applicant's weighted average cost of capital (WACC). The WACC is defined as the weighted average cost of debt (net of taxes) and equity. If you are unsure of what WACC to apply, please use 12%, which reflects the current Connect Illinois benchmark. As noted below, be sure to check Terminal Value calculations if using a WACC other than 12%.
  - Most organizations are financed through equity and/or debt. Some organizations use internal funds; others rely on other capital contributions (e.g., cooperatives through membership contributions, local government through tax revenues). Thus, for such entities where WACC is not applicable, please also use 12%.

- Please include a Terminal Value (TV) excluding cash from financing and investing activities for the project in year 14. The TV reflects the estimated value of the project beyond the forecast period. Thus, for your analysis, please multiply the Operating Cash Earnings in Year 14 by a TV multiple.
  - A standard TV multiple of 10.2 is included in automatic calculations. This was determined using the formula:  $TV\ multiple = (1 + g) / (WACC - g)$ , where  $g$  is a perpetual growth rate. The WACC is assumed to be 12% and the perpetual growth rate is assumed to be 2%. This yields a TV multiple of 10.2.
  - If an applicant would like to use a different TV multiple, please use the formula:  $TV\ multiple = (1 + g) / (WACC - g)$ . Please note in your analysis if a TV multiple other than 10.2 was used.
- Please be sure to include the detailed spreadsheet of the NPV analysis.

**P.C2. Commitment Letter for Letter of Credit / Performance Bond: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (PDF)

Please provide a letter from a qualifying entity committing to issue an irrevocable standby letter of credit or performance bond meeting the requirements of the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 program.

Per the BEAD NOFO and the [NTIA Letter of Credit Waiver](#), a Letter of Commitment for a **Letter of Credit** must be provided by either a bank that meets eligibility requirements consistent with 47 CFR 54.804(c)(2) or a US Credit Union insured by National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and has a Weiss-issued safety rating of B- or better. A Letter of Commitment for a **Performance Bond** must be from a company holding a certificate of authority as an acceptable surety on federal bonds as identified in the Department of Treasury Circular 570. The letter must at a minimum provide the dollar amount of the letter of credit and the issuing bank’s agreement to follow the terms and conditions of the State’s [model letter of credit](#).

The State will look for, among others, (i) a certification that the committing party meets relevant requirements as outlined by NTIA, (ii) the specific maximum dollar amount to be committed, and (iii) a proper signature from the committing party.

Note that this irrevocable letter of credit or performance bond **must** be prepared prior to entering into any subgrantee agreement with the State. A sample irrevocable letter of credit draft can be found [here](#).

**P.C2.A. NTIA Letter of Credit Waiver for Initial Amount of Letter of Credit / Performance Bond**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Indicate “Yes” below if you intend to utilize the NTIA’s Letter of Credit Waiver **specifically** to submit a letter of credit or performance bond of a reduced amount of no less than 10% of the award (see [NTIA Letter of Credit Waiver](#), Section 2.4). **Note, this does not impact the scoring or prioritization of this project.**

Please note, indicating Yes requires that reimbursements for the project do not exceed 6 months should your application be selected, per NTIA guidance. BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 funds will be disbursed through fixed-amount subawards based on the milestones defined in the grant agreement and in compliance with the NTIA's guidance on the implementation of exceptions, adjustments, and clarifications to certain provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), codified at 2 CFR Part 200, and the application of related provisions of the Uniform Guidance to the BEAD Program. For subgrantees employing this waiver option, the grant agreement may allow for interim milestone reimbursements when necessary to ensure reimbursements occur no less than every six months to ensure compliance with the relevant requirement.

**P.C2.B. Letter of Credit / Performance Bond Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you attest in good faith that you can obtain either (i) the irrevocable standby Letter of Credit and an opinion letter from legal counsel stating that, in a proceeding under the Bankruptcy Code, the bankruptcy court would not treat the letter of credit as property of the winning subgrantee's bankruptcy estate prior to final subgrant issuance, or (ii) a qualifying Performance Bond as outlined by the [NTIA's Letter of Credit Waiver](#)?

## IV.6 Part D: Labor Project-Based Qualifications

This section of the application focuses on project-based qualifications pertaining to labor requirements. Applicants are required to provide supporting narratives and materials to demonstrate project-based labor qualifications.

### **P.D1. Subcontractors**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Will the project workforce include any (sub)contractors?

*Note: If P.D1. is Yes*

#### **P.D1.A. Subcontractor information**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please disclose all contractors and subcontractors planned to carry out work for this project, including the actions they will complete. If contractors and/or subcontractors have not yet been identified, please describe the anticipated need for (sub)contractors and a description of how they will be procured.

### **P.D2. Unionized Workers**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Will any worker completing this project be non-unionized (including contractors and subcontractors)?

*Note: If P.D2. is Yes*

#### **P.D2.A. Non-Unionized Workers: Titles and Size – For Projects with Non-Unionized Workers: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

For all non-unionized workers, provide a narrative containing the job titles and size of the workforce (Full Time Employee positions, including for contractors and subcontractors) required to carry out the proposed work over the course of the project and the entity that will employ each portion of the workforce.

Note, if contractors and/or subcontractors have not yet been identified, please describe the anticipated job titles and size of the (sub)contracted workforce and a description of how they will be procured.

*Note: If P.D2. is Yes*

#### **P.D2.B. Non-Unionized Workers: Trainings – For Projects with Non-Unionized Workers: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

For all non-unionized workers, provide a narrative for each job title required to carry out the proposed work (including (sub)contractors).

This information must include, at a minimum:

- a. Safety training, certification, and/or licensure requirements (e.g., OSHA 10, OSHA 30, confined space, traffic control, or other training as relevant depending on title and work) including

whether there is a robust, in-house training program with established requirements tied to certifications and titles; and

- b. Information on the professional certifications and/or in-house training in place to ensure that deployment is done at a high standard.

This information must include information on contractors and subcontractors.

If contractors and/or subcontractors have not yet been identified, please describe the anticipated job titles and size of the (sub)contracted workforce and a description of how they will be procured.

**P.D3. Ensuring Appropriate Skills and Credentials: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide the steps that will be taken to ensure that all members of the project workforce will be appropriately skilled and have appropriate credentials. Prospective subgrantees must address steps taken to ensure the project workforce has **both** appropriate skills **and** appropriate credentials. Failure to address both may lead to disqualification per BEAD requirements.

Steps to ensure an appropriately skilled workforce may include Registered Apprenticeships or other joint labor-management training programs that serve all workers. Steps to ensure a workforce with appropriate credentials may include relevant pre-existing occupational training, certification, and licensure.

*Note: This is optional, but the State highly encourages your response*

**P.D4. Plans for Targeted Outreach on Workforce: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide a plan for how you will conduct targeted outreach to populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in broadband and information technology jobs to be included in the workforce for this project.

Note: Information in this narrative may be publicized to ensure a diverse set of stakeholders know about and participate in the opportunities created by this project.

**P.D5. BEP Compliance and Affirmative Steps: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will comply with all requirements of the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act (BEP), and all necessary affirmative steps as defined by BEAD to assure that minority businesses, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible?

**P.D6. Procurement compliance: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will adhere to methods of procurement per the relevant Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317, 200.321-323, 200.327) from the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), codified at 2 CFR Part 200?

**P.D7. Projects over \$10 Million**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Is your proposed project over \$10 million in estimated total project cost?

*Note: If P.D7. is Yes*

**P.D7.A. Labor Practices for Projects over \$10 Million: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that the project will include either (i) a Project Labor Agreement that meets all requirements outlined by relevant federal and state laws and regulations and the State of Illinois's NOFO for this program, or (ii) a Project Workforce Continuity Plan that meets all requirements as outlined in the State of Illinois's NOFO for this program; and that you will submit a copy of the applicable document to the State?

## IV.7 Part E: Environmental, Historical, and Climate-Related Project-Based Qualifications

This section of the application focuses on the environmental, historical, and climate-related aspects of the proposed broadband project. Applicants are required to provide supporting narratives and materials to demonstrate project-based environmental, historical, and climate-related qualifications.

### **P.E1. Environmental and Historical Preservation: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Describe how you have consulted the [NTIA Permitting and Environmental Information Application](#) and conducted the [Permitting Needs Assessment](#), and provide a narrative on how your network design plans can address the identified needs and minimize impact as it pertains to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historical Preservation Act (NHPA). The narrative must include, at a minimum:

- Awareness of NEPA / NHPA requirements as identified per the NTIA Permitting and Environmental Information Application
- Walkthrough of your Permitting Needs Assessment
- How you intend to sufficiently meet the needs identified per your assessment above (e.g., plans, budget, etc.)

If you intend to work with consultants to meet this requirement, please include information on the planned and/or confirmed consultants (e.g., experience on similar projects).

Note, per BEAD requirements, all projects containing construction and/or ground-disturbing activities must submit all required environmental documentation to NTIA prior to final selection, which also must describe how the project will comply with applicable environmental and national historical preservation requirements.

It is the subgrantee's responsibility to obtain all necessary federal, state, and local governmental permits and approvals necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. Projects and other eligible activities are expected to be designed so that they minimize the potential for adverse impacts on the environment. Subgrantees also must cooperate with NTIA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposed projects or other eligible activities. The failure to do so may be grounds for not making an award.

Proposals will be reviewed to ensure that they contain sufficient information to allow agency staff to conduct a NEPA analysis so that appropriate NEPA documentation can be submitted to NTIA, along with the recommendation for funding of the selected projects or other eligible activities. If additional information is required after an application is accepted for funding, funds can be withheld by NTIA under a specific award condition requiring the awardee to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient for the agency to make an assessment of any impacts that a project or other eligible activity may have on the environment.

**P.E1.A. Environmental and Historical Preservation: Prior violations**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you have any prior or current violations regarding Environmental and Historical Preservation requirements?

*Note: If Yes in P.E1.A.*

**P.E1.A.1. Environmental and Historical Preservation: Prior violations Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please submit a narrative on the prior and current violations, how they have been mitigated, and your plans for ensuring future compliance.

Please note that the State will work with NTIA to ensure all subgrantees comply with all relevant compliance requirements for Environmental and Historical Preservation.

**P.E1.B. Environmental and Historical Preservation: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you are aware of BEAD requirements as they relate to permitting and Environmental and Historical Preservation, that you have reviewed NTIA guidance and resources to identify permitting needs and estimated impact regarding Environmental and Historical Preservation, and will develop a plan to meet all such requirements?

**P.E2. Climate Response Plan and Communication Strategy: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide an emergency plan and communication strategy to ensure timely, effective response to extreme weather events as it relates to BEAD-funded infrastructure and broadband service provided through it.

Prospective subgrantees are encouraged to review the State’s BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II, “Climate Assessment (Requirement 15),” to familiarize themselves with key climate risks identified in the State of Illinois. They are also encouraged to review additional resources provided by the BEAD NOFO, pages 63-64.

**P.E3. Climate Risk Mitigation Strategy**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Indicate “Yes” if your project contains a high-risk or extremely high-risk county, based on the Draft 2023 Illinois Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Counties that are indicated as high-risk or extremely high-risk are available in [Appendix 2](#) of this Guidebook.

*Note: If P.E3. is Yes*

**P.E3.A. Climate Risk Mitigation Strategy: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative



Provide a narrative on the applicant's proposed climate risk mitigation strategy. This strategy must either commit to the State's perspective (see [Appendix 3](#) of this Guidebook) for the respective climate risk, or provide an alternative approach to mitigating risks.

**P.E4. Climate Resilience: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will abide by the proposed Climate Response Plan and Communication Strategy and Climate Risk Mitigation Strategies (if applicable), as provided in P.E2. and P.E3.A.?



## IV.8 Part F: Other Project-Based Qualifications

This section of the application focuses on additional certifications required to meet BEAD and State requirements.

### **P.F1. General Compliance Requirements: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you have read (where available today) and will comply with all federal and state laws and related regulations to be considered for an award as stipulated in the State of Illinois's NOFO, including, but not limited to:

- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200;
- 47 U.S.C. § 1702;
- The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions;
- General Terms and Conditions of the BEAD Program;
- The State of Illinois's BEAD Specific Award Conditions;
- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act; and
- Other existing or upcoming relevant NTIA guidance and applicable federal law?

### **P.F2. Broadband Standard Installation: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that, upon completion of the award, you will be capable of performing a standard broadband installation of qualifying broadband service to all end-users in the proposed Project Area, at a standard installation charge, within 10 business days of a service request?

### **P.F3. Network Management Practices: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that, in line with the BEAD NOFO, you will not impose data usage caps on any plans offered over a BEAD-funded network, or impose unjust or unreasonable network management practices?

### **P.F4. Low-Cost Service Option: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that you will provide a low-cost broadband service option to Eligible Subscribers, as detailed in [Appendix 4](#) of the Application Guidebook?

### **P.F5. Access to Service: Certification**

**Response Type:** Single selection (Yes)

Do you certify that you will provide access to broadband service to each customer served by the project that desires broadband service on terms and conditions that are reasonable and non-discriminatory?



## IV.9 Part S: Scoring Criteria

All information provided below will be used to score this project in accordance with the Merit Review Process as identified in the NOFO. Applicants are strongly advised to carefully read the section below in this Guidebook and the NOFO before proceeding. Responses below materially impact the prioritization of the submitted project, including but not limited to preliminary selection and deconfliction.

Note, the following scoring criteria will be evaluated based on materials submitted in prior questions and do not require additional material submission in this section:

- **Minimum BEAD Outlay: Financial Need with Respect to Reference Cost:** Scored based on Project Area Selection Sheet (P.A2.), Project Budget and Capital Investment Schedule: Template (P.B4.)
- **Speed to Deployment:** Scored based on Detailed Project Schedule (P.B1.), Project Budget and Capital Investment Schedule: Template (P.B4.)

### IV.9.1 P.S.A. Minimum BEAD Outlay: non-state match

*Scoring Note: This category impacts 20% of the score.*

#### **P.S.A1. Confirmation of Minimum 25% Match**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Is your match less than 25%, meaning you are requesting a match waiver? Please indicate “Yes” if so. This response must be consistent with the exact figure as shown in the “Project Cost Summary” tab, cell F14 of the Project Budget submitted above in P.B4. (Project Budget and Capital Investment Schedule: Template).

*Note: If P.S.A1. is Yes*

#### **P.S.A1.A. Match Waiver: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please detail why this application is requesting a waiver for the 25% match requirement per BEAD.

Per BEAD requirements, matching funds must be not less than 25% of project costs. Should an applicant be unable to meet this requirement, the applicant may petition the State to apply for a match waiver from the NTIA for their proposed project, which will be subject to the NTIA’s approval. However, note that the NTIA, at its sole discretion, may choose to deny a full or partial waiver of the match requirement, in which case the applicant must revise the application.

An applicant may file a waiver for the BEAD match requirement if unique circumstances prevent a matching contribution of at least 25%. These special circumstances may include:

- A business case that does not earn the required rate of return, even with a grant award, due to a limited revenue opportunity (e.g., few customers, low average revenue per subscriber, etc.)

- A uniquely high-cost structure for capital or operating expenses
- Severe economic distress in the community to be served, citing specific challenges that limit the ability to contribute the 25% match
- An extenuating circumstance preventing the applicant from raising matching funds after repeated efforts.

**P.S.A2.A. Description of Match and Financial Partners: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Provide a description of how you will provide a match for this project, including a description of all required documents to validate the availability of the match proposed. If additional financial partners will contribute to matching funds, identify below the financial partner(s) and the amount of contribution for each. Note that the award agreement will require confirmation of the project’s matching funds requirement and a description of how the subgrantee will provide the match.

The match must be reported to the State at each project milestone and/or unit built and verified through documentation and subgrantee statements. The State will report on matching funds and drawdowns to the NTIA as part of its grant monitoring requirements and verify each match through Federal Program Officer monitoring.

See below for additional guidance on BEAD match requirements:

**General Requirements:** All matching funds for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 Program must meet the requirements in 2 C.F.R. 200.306:

- Are verifiable from the non-federal entity's records
- Are not included as contributions for any other federal award
- Are necessary and reasonable to accomplish project or program objectives
- Are allowable under subpart E of 2 C.F.R. 200.306
- Are not paid by the federal government under another federal award, except where the federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that federal funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost-sharing requirements of other federal programs
- Are provided for in the approved budget when required by the federal awarding agency
- Conform to other provisions of 2 C.F.R. 200.306, as applicable.

**Match Source:** Per BEAD NOFO, III.B.1, a matching contribution may be provided by the subgrantee, the State of Illinois, a unit of local government, a utility company, a cooperative, a nonprofit or philanthropic organization, a for-profit company, a regional planning or governmental organization, a federal regional commission or authority, or any combination thereof. Should State matching funds become available, the State will post the update on its BEAD website with a description of how the funds will become

accessible in the subgrantee selection process. The State will also incorporate this information in the Illinois Broadband Connections newsletter to ensure all are aware of this opportunity.

While other federal program funds generally may not be used as match, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act expressly allows BEAD matching funds to come from a federal regional commission or authority, or from funds provided to a subgrantee for deploying broadband service to the extent permitted by law under:

- Families First Coronavirus Response Act
- CARES Act
- Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021
- American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
- Loan funding issued through a federal agency (e.g., USDA ReConnect Program)

**Match Type:** Per BEAD NOFO III.B.4, matching funds may be provided in the form of either cash or in-kind contributions, so long as such contributions are consistent with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth at 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

In-kind contributions, which may include third-party in-kind contributions, are non-cash donations of property, goods, or services that benefit a federally assisted project and that may count toward satisfying the non-federal matching requirement of a project's total budgeted costs when such contributions meet certain criteria. In-kind contributions must be allowable and allocable project expenses. The rules governing allowable in-kind contributions are detailed and encompass a wide range of properties and services. Applicants are encouraged to thoroughly consider potential sources of in-kind contributions that, depending on the particular property or service and the applicable federal cost principles, could include employee or volunteer services, equipment, supplies, indirect costs, computer hardware and software, and use of facilities. In the broadband context, this could include – consistent with federal cost principles – a waiver of fees associated with access to rights of way, pole attachments, conduits, or easements, or with access to other types of infrastructure. The State notes that in-kind contributions of articles, materials, and supplies to a project are subject to the requirements of the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act and the United States Department of Commerce's "Limited General Applicability Nonavailability Waiver of the Buy America Domestic Content Procurement Preference as Applied to Recipients of Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program."

#### **P.S.A2.B. Match: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Upload documentation that supports the match that is being included for this project and elaborated in the narrative for P.S.A2.A. Examples may include a letter of credit, a letter confirming funds from a bank, a board resolution committing funding, or loan documentation. Ensure each document uploaded is sufficiently described in P.S.A2.A. Should your project have a proposed match of 0%, please submit documentation that supports why a 0% match is warranted (e.g., supporting evidence for the match waiver requirement).

## IV.9.2 P.S.B. Affordability

*Scoring Note: This category impacts 15% of the score.*

### **P.S.B1. Project Type**

**Response Type:** Multiple Select

Please enter the type of project based on technology. Options include: Priority Broadband Project, Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Project, Combination Priority and Other Broadband Project.

- If this project will provision service via end-to-end fiber-optic facilities **only** to each end-user premise, select "Priority Broadband Project."
- If this project **only** uses any other technology to reach all end-users, select "Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Project."
- If this project contains a combination of end-to-end fiber-optic facilities and any other technology, select "Combination Priority and Other Broadband Project."

*Note: If P.S.B1. is Priority Broadband Project, OR Combination Priority and Other Broadband Project*

### **P.S.B2.A. Consumer Price for Reference Plan: Monthly recurring price for 1/1 Gbps**

**Response Type:** Numerical

Provide the monthly price without discounts, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges for consumers served by this project for the speed tier of 1/1Gbps, which must be provided by subgrantees. Please note that this price must reflect the price for internet service only, with no additional bundle requirements. For scoring purposes, please do not include in this figure any one-time, non-recurring fees (e.g., set-up fee).

Note, if you selected "Combination Priority and Other Broadband Project" above, please provide the price applicable to the portion of your project that will be serviced by Priority Broadband Deployment. The score will be assigned based on a weighted average of the Priority and Other Broadband Project reference price in relation to the share of BSLs represented per each project type.

Enter the price, rounded to two decimal places (cents), without any symbol, for the relevant scenario (for example: \$79.99 should be entered as "79.99").

*Note: If P.S.B1. is Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment Project, OR Combination Priority and Other Broadband Project*

### **P.S.B2.B. Consumer Price for Reference Plan: Monthly recurring price for 100/20 Mbps**

**Response Type:** Numerical

Provide the price without discounts, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges for consumers served by this project for the speed tier of 100/20 Mbps, which must be provided by subgrantees. Please note that this price must reflect the price for internet service only, with no additional bundle requirements. For scoring purposes, please do not include in this figure any one-time, non-recurring fees (e.g., set-up fee).

Note, if you selected “Combination Priority and Other Broadband Project” above, please provide the price applicable to the portion of your project that will be serviced by Other Last-Mile Broadband Deployment. The score will be assigned based on a weighted average of the Priority and Other Broadband Project reference price in relations to the share of BSLs represented per each project type.

Enter the price, rounded to two decimal places (cents), without any symbol, for the relevant scenario (for example: \$79.99 should be entered as “79.99”).

**P.S.B2.C. Consumer Price for Reference Plan: Non-recurring price**

**Response Type:** Numerical

Provide all one-time non-recurring fees for the relevant speed tier above. Enter the price, rounded to two decimal places (cents), without any symbol, for the relevant scenario (for example: \$79.99 should be entered as “79.99”).

### IV.9.3 P.S.C. Fair Labor Practices

*Scoring Note: This category impacts 15% of the score.*

**P.S.C1. Project Labor Agreement (PLA)**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Please indicate “Yes” if a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) is available for the proposed project.

A PLA is a pre-hire collective bargaining agreement consistent with Section 8(f) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 158(f)) and the Illinois Project Labor Agreements Act (30 ILCS 571).

A provision of a PLA is not required for participation in the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, but will impact the score for the application. Subgrantees who indicate that a PLA is available for the project must provide a copy of the Project Labor Agreement. The Project Labor Agreement must:

- i. Set forth mutually binding procedures for resolving jurisdictional labor disputes and grievances.
- ii. Guarantee against strikes, lockouts, or similar actions.
- iii. Ensure a reliable source of labor.
- iv. Set goals for woman and minority apprenticeship hours.
- v. Permit the selection of the lowest responsible bidder, regardless of union status.
- vi. Bind all contractors and subcontractors by including bid specifications in all relevant bid documents.
- vii. Be signed by a bona fide labor organization. Subgrantees must provide contact information for the bona fide labor organization.
- viii. The grantee must maintain sufficient records to substantiate this information upon request.



If your proposed project is over \$10 million in estimated total cost, you must certify that your project will include either (i) a Project Labor Agreement, or (ii) a Project Workforce Continuity Plan.

*Note: If P.S.C1. is Yes*

**P.S.C1.A. Project Labor Agreement (PLA): Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

If a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) is available for this project, upload a PLA for this project that is compliant with federal and labor laws (e.g., National Labor Relations Act and Illinois Project Labor Agreements Act).

Note: A provision of a PLA is not required for participation in BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, but will impact the score for the application.

**P.S.C2.A. History of Compliance – Compliance with Federal and Labor Employment Laws: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Describe **your** past compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband deployment projects in the last three years.

If there are any past and current violations in the last three years, please include descriptions on actions taken to resolve and prevent them.

This description must include, at a minimum, history of compliance for laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.

**P.S.C2.B. History of Compliance – Contractors and Subcontractors: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Describe past compliance with federal labor and employment laws by all of your **planned and/or confirmed contractors and subcontractors** for this project.

If there are any past and current violations in the last three years, please include descriptions on actions taken to resolve and prevent them.

This description must include, at a minimum, history of compliance for laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years.

**P.S.C2.C. History of Compliance – Contractors and Subcontractors: Certification of disclosure**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you certify that your responses to P.S.C2.A. and P.S.C2.B. are accurate to the best of your knowledge, and you have disclosed all instances in which you, and/or your planned and/or confirmed (sub)contractors have been found to have violated laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws for the preceding three years?

### **P.S.C3. Commitment to comply with all laws: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Submit a narrative of your plans for ensuring compliance with federal labor and employment laws, which must address how the prospective subgrantee will ensure compliance in its own labor and employment practices, as well as that of its contractors and subcontractors, including:

- Information on applicable wage scales and wage and overtime payment practices for each class of employees expected to be involved directly in the physical construction of the broadband network, inclusive of your workforce as well as those of your planned and/or confirmed (sub)contractors.
- How the subgrantee will ensure the implementation of workplace safety committees that are authorized to raise health and safety concerns in connection with the delivery of deployment projects.

This description must include, at a minimum, plans to ensure compliance with laws such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, or any other applicable labor and employment laws.

If there are no violations disclosed above, this commitment must share how you will stay compliant, including required information on applicable wage scales and workplace safety committees.

If you, your planned/confirmed contractors, and/or your planned/confirmed (sub)contractors have any violations disclosed above, this commitment must include mitigation plans to prevent such violations in addition to the required information on applicable wage scales and workplace safety committees.

### **IV.9.4 P.S.D. Speed of network and technical capabilities**

*Scoring Note: This category impacts 4% of the score.*

#### **P.S.D1. Download Speed**

**Response Type:** Numerical

Enter the highest available download speed to the customer after build in Mbps. This must correspond with the Professional Engineer-certified technical narrative, network design and diagram provided in P.B2. and B3.

Note: 1 Gbps is equivalent to 1000 Mbps. Do not enter any units of measure.

#### **P.S.D2. Upload Speed**

**Response Type:** Numerical

Enter the highest available upload speed to the customer after build in Mbps. This must correspond with the Professional Engineer-certified technical narrative, network design and diagram provided in P.B2. and B3.

Note: 1 Gbps is equivalent to 1000 Mbps. Do not enter any units of measure.

### **P.S.D3. Maximum Latency**

**Response Type:** Numerical

Enter the maximum latency after build available to the customer in milliseconds. This must correspond with the Professional Engineer-certified technical narrative, network design and diagram provided in P.B2. and B3. Do not enter any units of measure.

## IV.9.5 P.S.E. Open access and use of existing network

*Scoring Note: This category impacts 3% of the score.*

### **P.S.E1. Open Access Offering**

**Response Type:** Single Select (Yes/No)

Do you plan to offer open access wholesale last-mile broadband service for the life of the subsidized networks?

Per NTIA, “Open Access” refers to an arrangement where the subgrantee offers non-discriminatory access to and use of its network on a wholesale basis to other providers seeking to provide broadband service to end-user locations, at just and reasonable wholesale rates for the useful life of the subsidized network assets.

*Note: If P.S.E1. is Yes*

#### **P.S.E1.A. Description of Open Access Offering: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Describe the wholesale access to infrastructure and the associated rates offered to other network providers seeking to provide broadband service to end-user locations. This access should be available for the life of the network subsidized by this program, and provided in fair, equal, and neutral terms to all interested network providers.

Note:

- **The description** must include a narrative on the **wholesale access offering** to your infrastructure.
- **The rates offered** must be reasonable and neutral, and must include a description of how they facilitate retail-based competition, including a description of the margin between the wholesale rates and retail rates.
- **The terms described** must be fair, equal, and neutral. Description of policies on neutrality must include how the wholesale offering will be available for any party. Terms must indicate that interconnections are available, and negotiations will be held in good faith.

*Note: If P.S.E1. is Yes*

**P.S.E2. Evidence of Retail ISP partners: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Provide evidence of retail ISP partners who use or will use the wholesale access as described in P.S.E1. Acceptable evidence may include signed commitments, contracts, letters of intent, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) from potential partner providers.

*Note: If P.S.E1. is Yes*

**P.S.E3. Evidence of Publicly Available Open Access Policy: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Provide evidence that the policy for open access to infrastructure defined in P.S.E1. is publicly available. Acceptable evidence may include screenshots from a website, flyer, or other public-facing material or communication indicating the availability of this access policy.

## IV.9.6 P.S.F. Local coordination: evidence of community support

*Scoring Note: This category impacts 5% of the score.*

**P.S.F1. Evidence of Community Support: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please provide a narrative describing evidence of community support, such as a summary of letters of support received, relevant strategic plans, community survey and outreach efforts, and other community feedback received.

The evaluation of the evidence of community support will be similar to the relevant evaluation during Connect Illinois, Round 3. Factors for consideration include (a) degree of personalized and specific letters that reflect a broad spectrum of community members, (b) degree to which the project fits into an existing community strategic plan or commitments from the community, (c) recent survey that covers a broad spectrum of the community, with statistically meaningful results regarding level of need, gaps, and project support, (d) evidence of community outreach efforts to gauge interest in the project, or (e) other community feedback or evidence of community engagement / collaboration that shows compelling need and support for the project.

### A) Support Letters

- Customized, specific letters of support demonstrating genuine, localized endorsement from stakeholders such as:
  - Local and regional government officials (e.g., county, municipality, farm bureau, economic development organizations, agency elected officials)
  - Community institutions benefitting from broadband (e.g., schools, libraries)
  - Community organizations (e.g., non-profits, employers, etc.)

- Individual end-users (e.g., residents and businesses) with personal stake in the project

#### B) Strategic Plan or Community Commitment

- Demonstration of how the project aligns with an existing community strategic plan, such as how the proposed project addresses documented broadband gaps, connectivity barriers, and community priorities.

#### C) Recent Survey

- Survey within last 12-24 months to gauge a community's broadband needs, service gaps, technology preferences, etc. Survey touches upon level of need, gaps, and support for a broadband project.
  - Example: Survey conducted by a county that participated in the [Broadband Breakthrough](#) program.

#### D) Community Outreach

- Evidence of active community engagement that documents meaningful outreach and input from a broad spectrum of the community (e.g., evidence of townhall meetings, local meeting attendance, social media outreach to targeted constituents)

#### E) Community Feedback and Engagement

- Examples of other evidence of community engagement and interest include (but are not limited to):
  - Local commitment to support the project with infrastructure planning and deployment (e.g., land use negotiations, permitting, pole attachment, etc.)
  - Proof of previous and/or ongoing collaborative efforts with the community (e.g., history of partnership)
  - Other community feedback that shows compelling need and project support

Evidence of support must address breadth of support from the populations impacted by and geographic areas included in the proposed project.

If evidence of community support is not available, please write "Not applicable".

#### **P.S.F1.A. Evidence of Community Support: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Please upload any documents needed to support the narrative above for P.S.F1. Evidence must be submitted to receive points for this scoring criterion, unless your response above is "Not applicable."

#### IV.9.7 P.S.G. Local coordination: verified financial commitment from community

*Scoring Note: This category impacts 5% of the score.*

#### **P.S.G1. Financial Contribution from Community: Narrative**

**Response Type:** Narrative

Please address the following, as each is applicable:

- (a) Degree of financial contribution from municipal government and/or community-based members and institutions;
- (b) In-kind resource commitments from municipal government and/or community-based members and institutions; and
- (c) Evidence to support verification of pledge.

Note that the figures and descriptions provided for (a) and (b) must be evidenced in the Project Budget and Capital Investment Schedule: Template submitted in P.B4.

Evidence to support verification of pledge must be submitted to demonstrate the cited community commitment to receive points (e.g., signed letter of intent, signed letter of commitment, municipal resolutions, etc.). If not applicable, please write "Not applicable".

**P.S.G1.A. Financial Contribution: Documentation**

**Response Type:** Document Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, XLSX, DOCX, JPEG, PNG)

Please upload documentation to support the above narrative for P.S.G1. Evidence must be submitted to receive points for this scoring criterion, unless your response above is "Not applicable."

## IV.10 Part Z: Regulatory Information

This section of the application collects the Uniform Grant Application Form, which is mandatory per State requirements for all applicants.

### **P.Z1. Uniform Grant Application Form: Template**

**Response Type:** Template Upload (Permitted file types: PDF, PNG, JPG)

Please upload the completed [Uniform Grant Application Form](#). The full form, along with the signature page, must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with the application.

## IV.11 Next Steps after Submission

Response Type: Single Select (Yes)

Upon completion of this form, the contact information connected to your entity submission linked in P.AD.2. and the Primary Contact email address from P.AD.4. will receive a Project Form Submission ID (PFS) via email. You will need to enter this ID for Part 3, Application Form on Smartsheet available [here](#).

Please note that the submission of the Entity Form and the Project Form on Airtable does **not** constitute full completion of the application. Only after all 3 parts have been completed will an application be considered complete.

If you are submitting multiple applications as part of BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, please repeat Part 2 (submission of this Project Form) and Part 3 (submission of the Smartsheet form with both Entity Form and Project Form Submission IDs) for each project. As a reminder, **only one** Entity Form entry must be submitted per applicant, and if one applicant is submitting more than one application, the **same** Entity Form submission ID must be used across **all** Project Form submissions.

**Please indicate your understanding below.**

“I understand that, to formally complete my application for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4, I must submit the Part 3 Application Form on Smartsheet with the Entity Form Submission ID and Project Form Submission ID sent to my email.”



## V Application Form (Part 3)

### Instructions:

The application form, [linked here](#), is the final form for an application to be considered complete. **Failure to submit this form will prevent your application from being considered for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4.**

Before proceeding, you must have completed Part 1: Entity Form and Part 2: Project Form to submit the Application Form.

Questions? Contact [broadband@illinois.gov](mailto:broadband@illinois.gov).

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**Certification:** By checking this box I understand for my application to be considered, my entity must be pre-qualified prior to application deadline. For more information on pre-qualification, please visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/broadband/bead/bead-rd-4-prequalification.html>.

### Contact First Name

**Response Type:** Short Answer

### Contact Last Name

**Response Type:** Short Answer

### Contact Email Address

**Response Type:** Short Answer

### Contact Phone Number

**Response Type:** Short Answer

### Applicant Legal Name

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Enter the legal entity name which matches what was provided in the Entity Form, E.AD.1.

### Doing Business As (DBA)

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Enter the DBA which matches what was provided in the Entity Form, E.AD.2.

### Project Name

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Enter the project name identified in Project Form, P.AD.1.

**Entity Form Submission ID**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Enter the EFS ID provided to the primary and secondary contacts upon submission of the Entity Form.

**Project Form Submission ID**

**Response Type:** Short Answer

Enter the PFS ID provided to the primary and secondary contacts upon submission of the Project Form.

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The completion of this form marks the application as officially complete.

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# VI Appendices

## VI.1 Appendix 1: Instructions for Lower Tier Participant Certification (applies to subgrantees)

This Appendix includes information related to Entity Form, E.D2.I. The language below is directly excerpted from the BEAD NOFO, pages 78-80.

### **Instructions for Lower Tier Participant Certification (applies to subgrantees):**

1. By submitting this proposal and accepting federal funding, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below and agrees to comply with the requirements of 2 C.F.R. Parts 180, 1200 and 1326.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension or debarment.
3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to which this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms *covered transaction*, *civil judgment*, *debarment*, *suspension*, *ineligible*, *participant*, *person*, *principal*, and *voluntarily excluded*, as used in this clause, are defined in 2 C.F.R. Parts 180, 1200 and 1326. You may contact the person to whom this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 C.F.R. Part 9, Subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.
6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include the clause titled "Instructions for Lower Tier Participant Certification" including the "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion- Lower Tier Covered Transaction," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions and will require lower tier participants to comply with 2 C.F.R. Parts 180 and 1200.
  - a. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not proposed for debarment under 48 C.F.R. Part 9, Subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant is

responsible for ensuring that its principals are not suspended, debarred, or otherwise ineligible to participate in covered transactions. To verify the eligibility of its principals, as well as the eligibility of any prospective lower tier participants, each participant may, but is not required to, check the System for Award Management Exclusions website (<https://www.sam.gov>).

- b. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
- c. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 C.F.R. Part 9, Subpart 9.4, suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension or debarment.

**Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions:**

- 1. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participating in covered transactions by any federal department or agency.
- 2. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

## VI.2 Appendix 2: High Risk and Very High Risk Climate Counties

This Appendix includes information related to Project Form, P.E3. The information below is directly excerpted from the State’s BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II, pages 119-120.

Weather or climate hazard	Counties at high risk	Counties at very high risk
Drought	Champaign, Coles, De Witt, Jackson	None
Earthquake	None	None
Cold Wave	Champaign, Coles, Cook, De Witt, Winnebago, Kane, Jackson, Kankakee, St. Clair, Will	None
Heat Wave	Alexander, Bond, Brown, Coles, Champaign, De Witt, Fayette, Franklin, Jefferson, Kane, Kankakee, Madison, Marion, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union, Wabash, Wayne, Williamson, Winnebago	Cook, Jackson, St. Clair
Coastal Flooding	None	Cook
Dam/Levee Failure	None	None
Flash Flooding	Carroll, Cass, Christian, De Witt, Douglas, Ford, Grundy, Henry, Jackson, Jefferson, Jo Daviess, Kankakee, Lawrence, Madison, Marion, Marshall, McDonough, Perry, Rock Island, Saline, Schuyler, St. Clair, Stephenson, Union, Vermilion, Wayne, Williamson	Champaign, Clay, Coles, Cook, DuPage, Franklin, Fulton, Kane, Knox, La Salle, Lake, Macon, McLean, Morgan, Peoria, Sangamon, Tazewell, Will, Winnebago, Woodford
Riverine Flooding	Alexander, Champaign, Coles, Cook, De Witt, Douglas, Franklin, Gallatin, Kane, Kankakee, La Salle, Lawrence, Madison, McDonough, McHenry, Peoria, Pope, Pulaski, Rock Island, Saline, Stephenson, Tazewell, Union, Vermilion, Wabash, Wayne, Woodford	Jackson, Massac, St. Clair, Winnebago
Landslide	None	None
Mine Subsidence	La Salle, St. Clair	None
Pandemic	Champaign, Coles, De Witt, Jackson, Kane, Kankakee, La Salle, St. Clair, Winnebago	None
Hail	DuPage, Fayette, Franklin, Fulton, Henderson, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Kane, Knox, Lake, Lawrence, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Madison, Marion, Massac, McDonough, McHenry, Morgan, Moultrie, Ogle, Peoria, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Rock Island, Saline, Schuyler, St. Clair, Stephenson, Union,	Douglas, Kankakee, La Salle, Sangamon

Vermilion, Wabash, Warren, Wayne, Will, Williamson,  
Winnebago

Lightning	None	None
Wind	Alexander, Bond, Boone, Brown, Bureau, Cass, Clay, Coles, De Witt, Douglas, DuPage, Fayette, Gallatin, Grundy, Hardin, Henry, Kane, Kankakee, Knox, Lake, Lawrence, Logan, Macon, Madison, Marion, McDonough, McHenry, McLean, Mercer, Morgan, Ogle, Peoria, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Rock Island, Saline, Sangamon, Schuyler, Stephenson, Tazewell, Union, Wabash, Warren, Wayne, Will	Champaign, Cook, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Massac, St. Clair, Vermilion, Williamson, Winnebago
Tornado	Bond, Boone, Christian, Clinton, Douglas, DuPage, Fayette, Grundy, Henry, Iroquois, Jefferson, Kane, Knox, Lake, Livingston, Logan, Marion, Massac, McHenry, McLean, Morgan, Ogle, Peoria, Randolph, Rock Island, Schuyler, Union, Wabash, Warren, Wayne, Williamson, Winnebago	Champaign, Coles, Cook, De Witt, Fulton, Jackson, Kankakee, La Salle, Macon, Madison, Sangamon, St. Clair, Tazewell, Vermilion, Will, Woodford
Wildfire	None	None
Ice Storms	Champaign, De Witt	None
Winter Storms	Bond, Boone, Brown, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Clay, Coles, Cook, De Witt, Douglas, DuPage, Fayette, Franklin, Hardin, Jackson, Jefferson, Kane, Kankakee, Knox, La Salle, Lake, Lawrence, Macon, Macoupin, Madison, Marion, McDonough, McHenry, Morgan, Ogle, Peoria, Perry, Rock Island, Saline, Sangamon, Schuyler, St. Clair, Stephenson, Union, Vermilion, Wabash, Warren, Wayne, Will, Williamson, Winnebago	Alexander, Massac, Pope, Pulaski

## VI.3 Appendix 3: Climate Risk Mitigation Strategy

This Appendix includes information related to Project Form, P.E3.A. The information below is directly excerpted from the State’s BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II, page 123.

Weather and climate risk	Risk to new infrastructure	Proposed mitigation strategy
Flooding	Could damage buried and underground plant, central office, and CPE	Selection of a technology platform suitable to the region’s climate risks, reliance on alternative siting of facilities
Severe storms – Hail	Could pose some risk to aerial plant and exposed CPE	Prompt restoration of service in the event of an outage
Severe storms – Wind	Could pose some risk to aerial plant and exposed CPE	Prompt restoration of service in the event of an outage
Severe storms – Tornado	Could damage aerial plant, exposed CPE, and central office equipment	Use of established plans and processes to deal with extreme weather-related risks
Winter storms	Could pose some risk to aerial plant, buried plant, and exposed CPE	Use of established plans and processes to deal with extreme weather-related risks Prompt restoration of service in the event of an outage

## VI.4 Appendix 4: Low-Cost Service Option

Per the State's BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II, pages 125-126, the State has adopted the low-cost broadband service option defined below and outlined in the BEAD NOFO and in Figure 8 of the BEAD Initial Proposal Guidance.

1. The proposed service option:
  - a. Costs \$30 per month or less, inclusive of all taxes, fees, and charges, with no additional, non-recurring costs or fees to the consumer. The monthly plan cost may be tied to the Producer Price Index, adjusting for inflation (pending NTIA approval);
  - b. Allows the end user to apply the Affordable Connectivity Benefit or any related successor program subsidy to the service price;
  - c. Provides the greater of (a) typical download speeds of at least 100 Mbps and typical upload speeds of at least 20 Mbps, or the fastest speeds the infrastructure is capable of if less than 100 Mbps/20 Mbps or (b) the performance benchmark for fixed terrestrial broadband service established by the Federal Communications Commission pursuant to Section 706(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended;
  - d. Provides typical latency measurements of no more than 100 milliseconds;
  - e. Is not subject to data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling, and is subject only to the same acceptable use policies to which subscribers to all other broadband internet access service plans offered to home subscribers by the participating subgrantee must adhere; and
  - f. In the event the provider later offers a low-cost plan with higher speeds downstream and/or upstream, permits Eligible Subscribers that are subscribed to a low-cost broadband service option to upgrade to the new low-cost offering at no cost.
2. Subgrantees must participate in the Affordable Connectivity Program or any successor program, and Eligible Subscribers that are eligible for a broadband service subsidy can apply the subsidy to the proposed service option.
  - a. Should the ACP or any successor program expire or fail to be established, the proposed service option described in (1) will remain as described above.

The State may consider waivers to the \$30 low-cost service option, such that subgrantees may modify the low-cost service offering to be up to \$40 per month.

An applicant's proposed modification must:

- Not exceed \$40
- Include evidence demonstrating how the modification would support project sustainability based on the business case. The State will evaluate the impact of the following factors on project sustainability:
  - Linear density of the project area
  - Overall broadband adoption rates



- Estimated degree of households eligible for the low-cost service option and average revenue per user (ARPU)
- Cost structure for recurring operating expenses

The State will review evidence with consideration for how the factors above contribute to an unsustainable business case with the \$30 low-cost service option. The State will then compare the metrics to benchmark data for the State, based on prior Connect Illinois grant rounds.

Further, per the State's BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO, the State will apply the eligibility criteria that was used for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) to define Eligible Subscribers for the low-cost broadband service option. Per the FCC, a household was eligible for the ACP if a member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines;
- Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Participates in Tribal-specific programs, such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs' General Assistance, Tribal TANF, or a food distribution program on Indian Reservations;
- Is approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision in the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, or 2021-2022 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income program.

## VI.5 Appendix 5: Additional Materials and Resources

Category	Resources	Links
BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 Application Forms	Entity Form	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	Project Form	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	Application Submission Form	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 Application Templates and Reference Materials	E.F1.A. (Template) Ownership Information Template	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	E.G3./G4. (Template) Existing Broadband Projects Template	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	E.I1. (Template) Mandatory Disclosure Form	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	E.I2. (Template) Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	E.I3. (Template) W-9 Form	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.A2. (Template) Project Area Selection Template	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.B1. (Template) Project Schedule Template	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.B2.B. (Template) Fixed Wireless Design Submission Template	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.B3. (Reference) Example Logical Network Diagram	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.B4. (Template) Project Budget and Capital Investment Schedule Template	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.B5. (Template) Professional Engineer Certification	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.C1. (Template) Pro Forma Template	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	P.C2. (Reference) Sample Letter of Credit	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
P.Z1. (Template) Uniform Grant Application Form	<a href="#">[Link]</a>	
BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 Resources	BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 NOFO	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 FAQ	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	State of Illinois BEAD Initial Proposal, Volume II	<a href="#">[Link]</a>
	NTIA BEAD NOFO	<a href="#">[Link]</a>