



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
OFFICE OF BROADBAND
JB Pritzker, Governor



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM

Closing the Digital Divide in Illinois

Introduction to the Pre-Qualification Process for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4

June 17, 2024

Today's Agenda



Overview of BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4

- Goals of the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4
- Overview of key milestones and where we are today
- Timeline of subgrantee selection process



Overview of Qualification Process for Subgrantees

- Qualifications required to participate in BEAD programs
- Context and objectives for pre-qualification process
- Timeline and outcomes of the pre-qualification process



Participating in the Pre-Qualification Process

- Step-by-step guide to participating in the pre-qualification process
- Next steps to submit pre-qualification materials

1

Overview of Connect Illinois Round 4

Broadband Equity, Access, and
Deployment (BEAD)

What are the goals of BEAD?



The BEAD Program awarded Illinois \$1.04 billion to connect all unserved and underserved locations to broadband over the next 5 years

1. Page 14 of BEAD NOFO, on the definition of Priority Broadband Project
2. Page 33 of BEAD NOFO, on the allocation of grant funds
3. Page 65 of BEAD NOFO, on deployment deadlines and benchmarks
4. Page 42-46 of BEAD NOFO, on inclusion of affordability in the BEAD scoring criteria

Source: [BEAD NOFO](#)



Ensure universal coverage across all un/underserved locations in the state, maximizing deployment of end-to-end fiber, and only using non-fiber where fiber costs are extremely high¹



Prioritize projects providing broadband access to unserved and underserved locations and community anchor institutions, Wi-Fi equipment for MDUs then other digital equity and inclusion priorities²



Run subgrantee process within one year of approval of the Initial Proposal, and complete implementation within four years of receipt of funds³



Focus on improving broadband affordability through a low-cost broadband service option, and a middle-class affordability plan⁴

Illinois's Initial Proposal Volume II is approved by NTIA on June 13, 2024



What does this mean for Illinois?

- NTIA has approved Illinois's plan to conduct the subgrantee process
- However, the State cannot start the subgrantee process until the challenge process results are approved by NTIA

Biden-Harris Administration Approves Illinois, Oregon, and Puerto Rico's "Internet for All" Initial Proposal

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13, 2024

News Media Contact

NTIA, Office of Public Affairs

Two States and Puerto Rico Requested Access to BEAD Funds Totaling Over \$2 billion

WASHINGTON – The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has approved Illinois, Oregon, and Puerto Rico's Initial Proposals for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, a cornerstone of the Biden-Harris Administration's "Internet for All" initiative.

This approval enables Illinois, Oregon, and Puerto Rico to request access to funding and begin implementation of the BEAD program—a major step towards closing the digital divide and meeting the President's goal of connecting everyone in America with affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet service.

Today's action allows the entities to request access to:

- **Illinois:** More than \$1 billion
- **Oregon:** More than \$688 million
- **Puerto Rico:** More than \$334 million

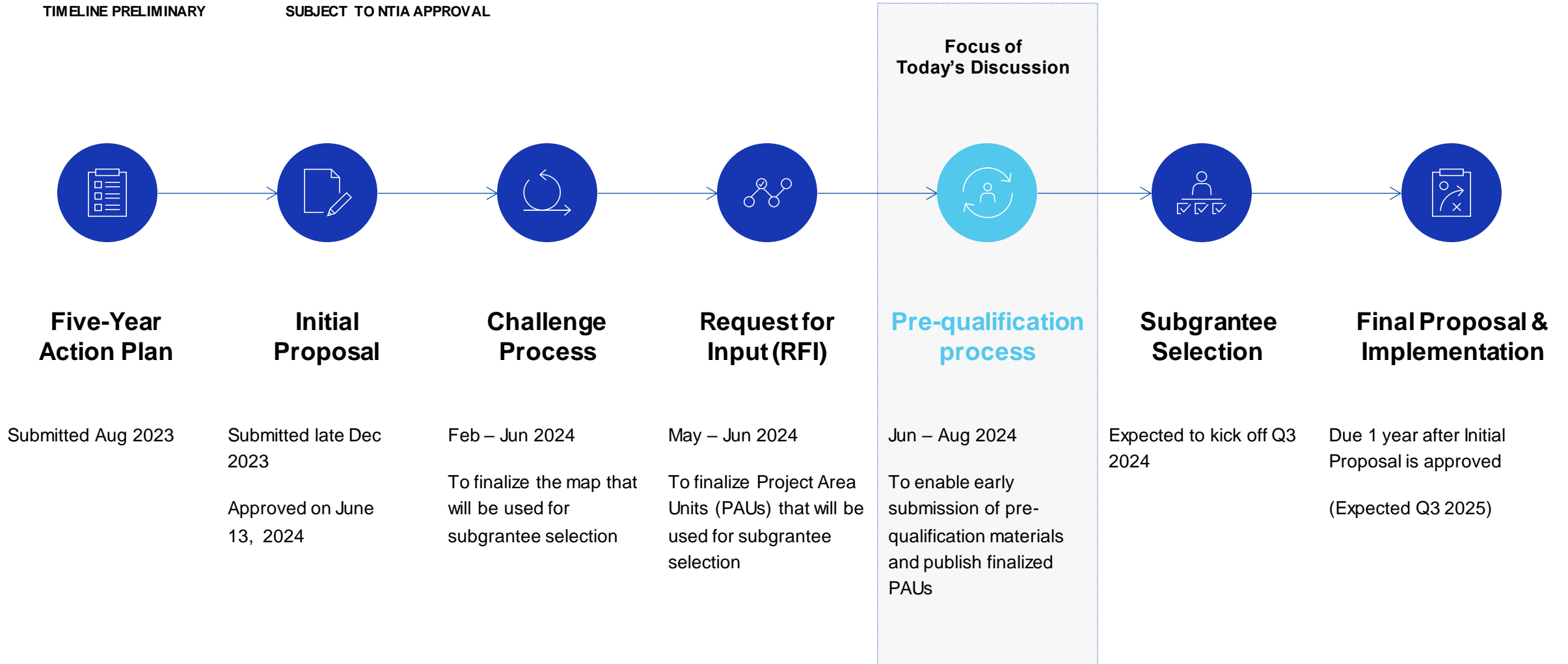
Source: [Biden-Harris Administration Approves Illinois, Oregon, and Puerto Rico's "Internet for All" Initial Proposal](#), NTIA



Overview of the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 timeline & key milestones

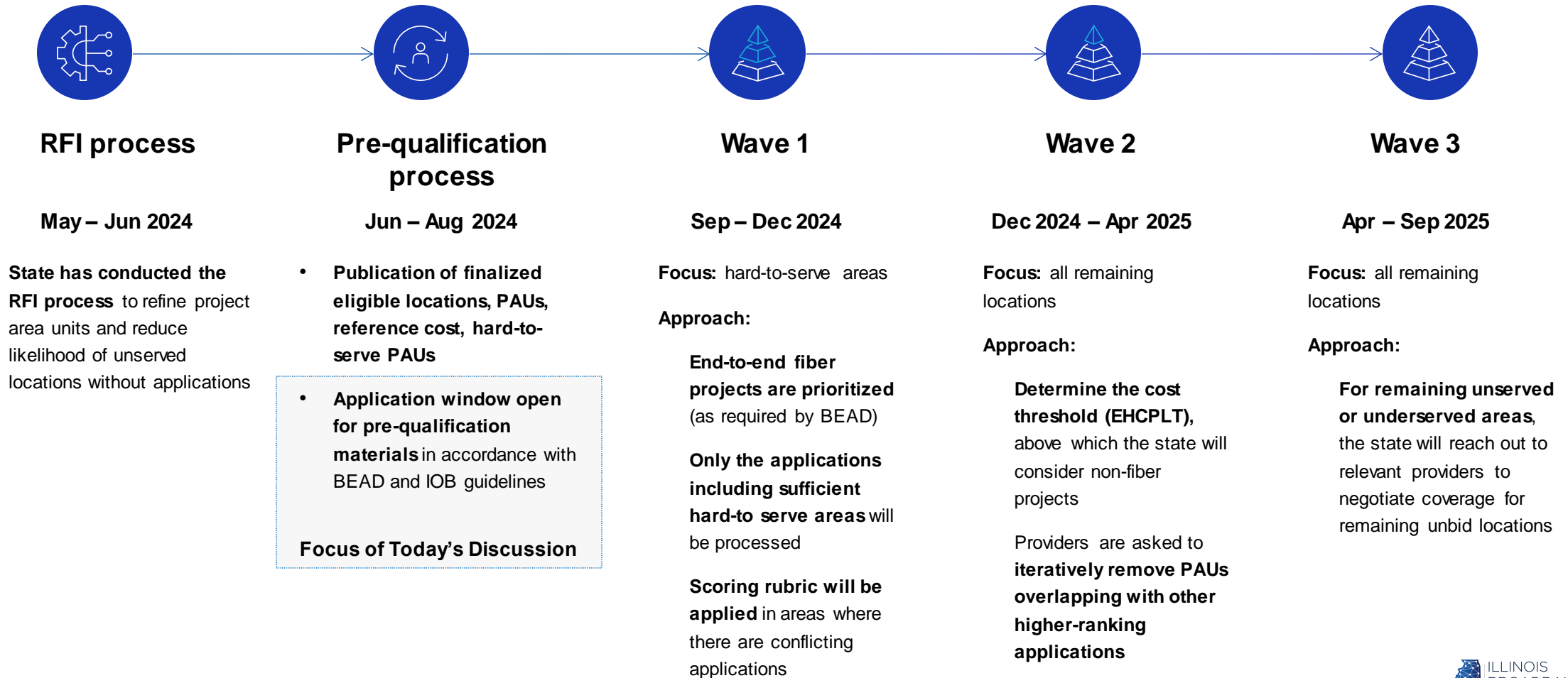
TIMELINE PRELIMINARY

SUBJECT TO NTIA APPROVAL



The IOB plans to use the pre-subgrantee process to collect pre-qualification materials and publish finalized PAUs

TIMELINE PRELIMINARY SUBJECT TO NTIA APPROVAL



2

Overview of the Qualification Process for Subgrantees

There are seven components required to qualify for Connect Illinois Round 4



A 
Financial capabilities

B 
Managerial capabilities

C 
Technical capabilities

D 
Legal and regulatory compliance

E 
Operational capabilities

F 
Ownership

G 
Stewardship of other public funding

There are *four* stages where prospective subgrantees can submit qualification materials

INFORMATION BASED ON STATE DECISION TIMELINE TENTATIVE SUBJECT TO NTIA APPROVAL

 Strongly encouraged  Mandatory

Pre-qualification period

- Prospective subgrantees submit **non-project specific qualifications**
 - Allowed to submit some or all qualifications
- Receive feedback or approval of submitted materials
- Strongly encouraged and non-punitive

Application Period

Prospective subgrantees submit **project-specific qualifications**

Must submit any non-project related qualifications not approved during the pre-qualification period

Prior to Final Proposal

Provisionally selected awardees **submit mandatory revisions**

Provisionally selected awardees **submit any remaining qualification materials** necessary to meet State & BEAD requirements

Prior to Grant Agreement

Provisionally selected awardees **submit an irrevocable standby letter of credit or BEAD letter of credit waiver** (based on IV.D.2.a.ii of BEAD NOFO)

Awardees may also need to submit additional qualification materials requested from the state

Focus of Today's Discussion

Note: all timeline tentative and subject to NTIA approval

Source: Connect Illinois Initial Proposal Vol. 2



- 1 Gain familiarity with BEAD requirements**
 Gain an early familiarity with the BEAD program’s requirements and receive feedback on qualification materials from the IOB

- 2 Reduce administrative burden**
 Potentially obtain early approval on qualification materials, reducing the administrative burden during the subgrantee process

- 3 Mitigate risk and delays**
 Mitigate risk and potential delays by having more time to identify and resolve any potential shortcomings or concerns in the pre-qualification submissions before the sub-grantee process begins

Timeline

There are two review periods for the pre-qualification process

IOB Feedback may be provided at any point of time up to Connect IL Round 4 Wave 1

Pre-qualification process opens



June 17



Priority Review Deadline



July 9

Regular Review Deadline

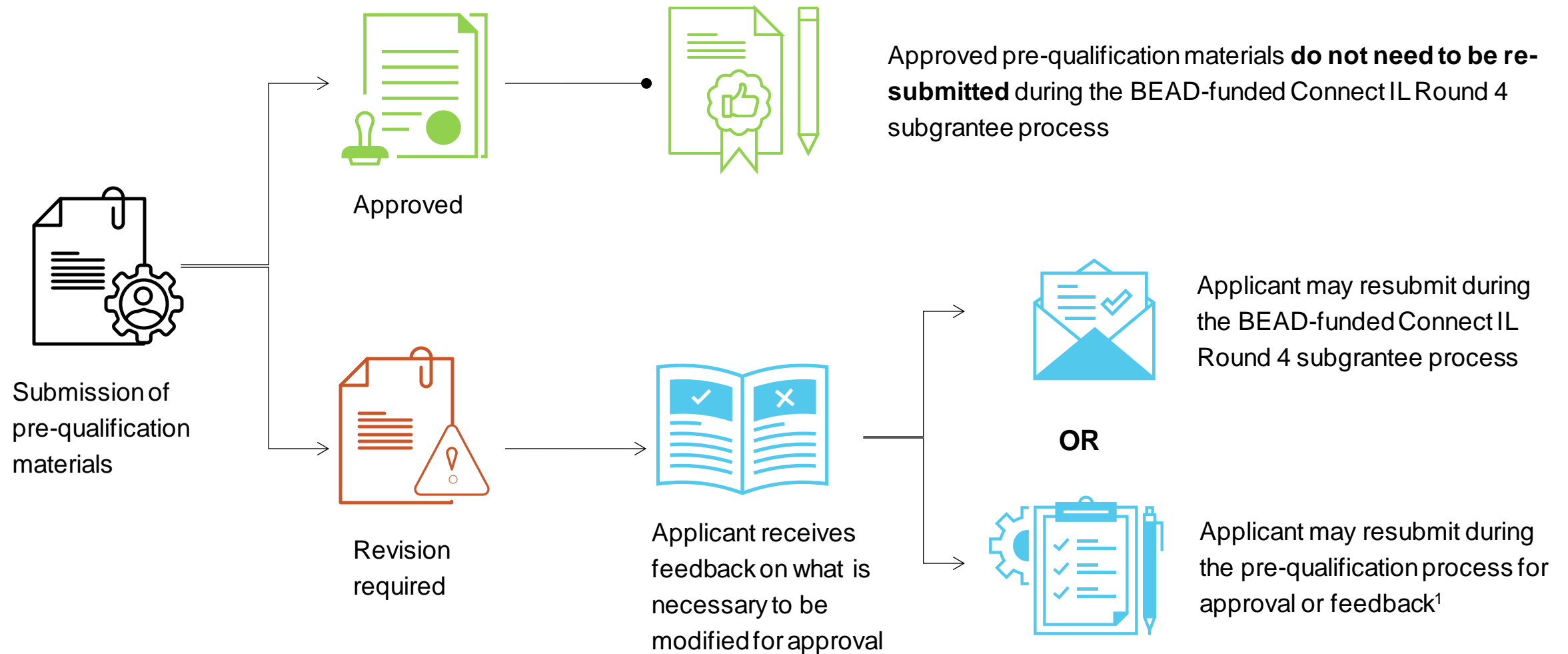


July 23

- Feedback will be **provided on a rolling basis** based on the submission date
- All applicants will receive feedback from the State before the subgrantee process opens

- Submit by the priority review deadline to receive feedback on materials with time to refine prior to subgrantee process launch
- You may **resubmit (incorporating feedback)** during the **pre-qualification process** or wait until the **subgrantee process opens**

There are two outcomes in the pre-qualification review process



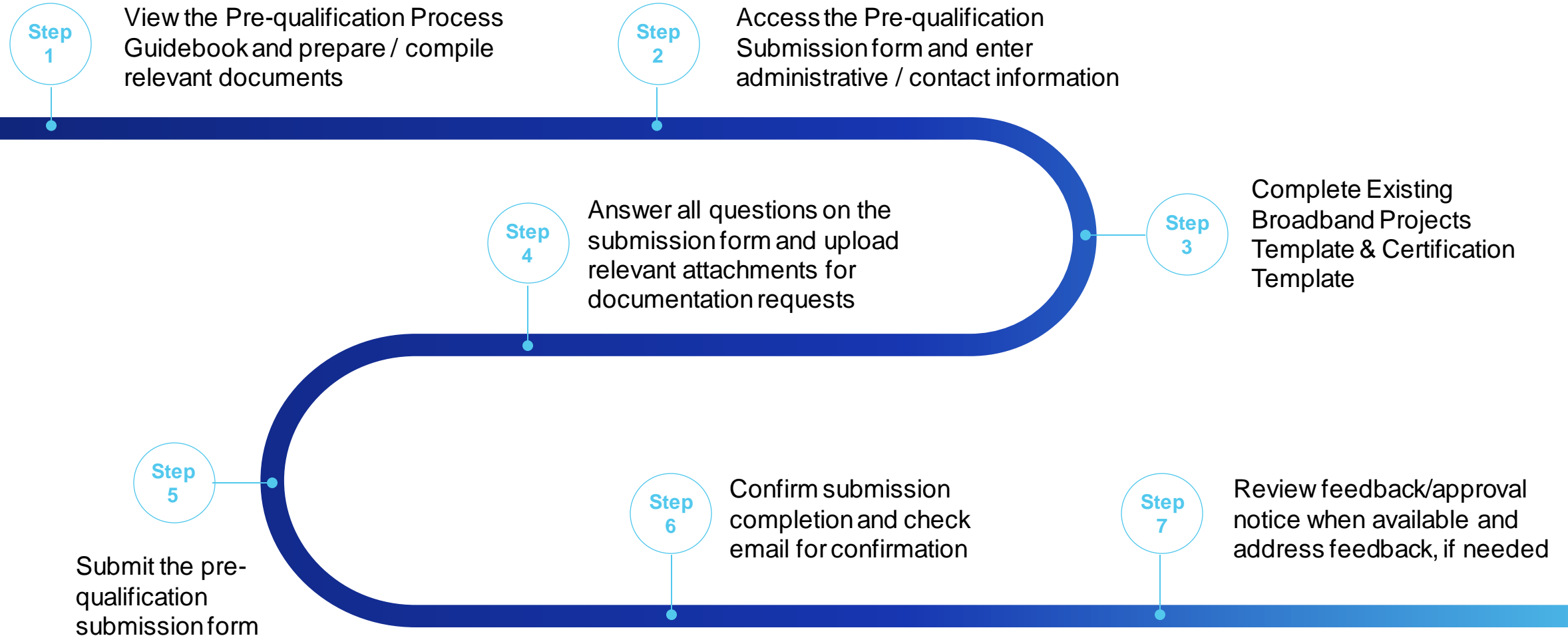
1. To ensure proper time for a resubmission, complete the initial submission by the priority review deadline. The State offers no guarantee that feedback will be sent with sufficient time to resubmit during the pre-qualification process

3

Participating in the Pre-Qualification Process

Overview of how to participate in the pre-qualification process

All participants will be able to submit pre-qualification materials from June 17 to July 23, 2024



Step 1

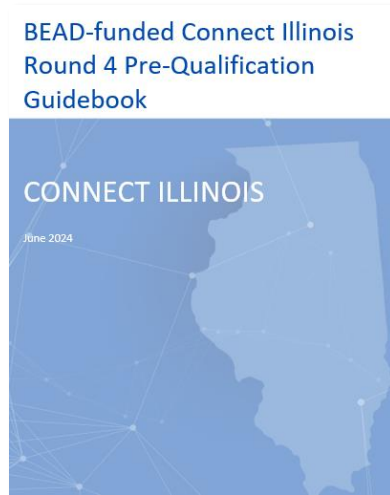
Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

View the Pre-qualification Process Guidebook and prepare/compile relevant documents



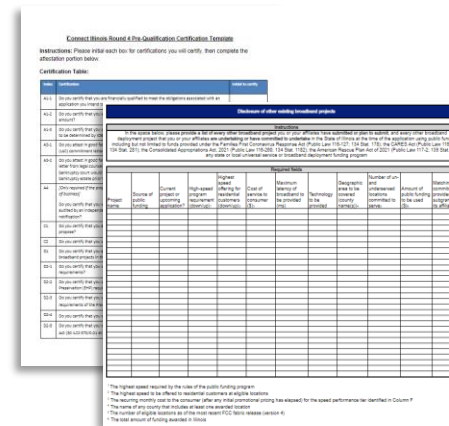
1a

Review the Pre-Qualification Process Guidebook



1b

Download and prepare the relevant submission templates



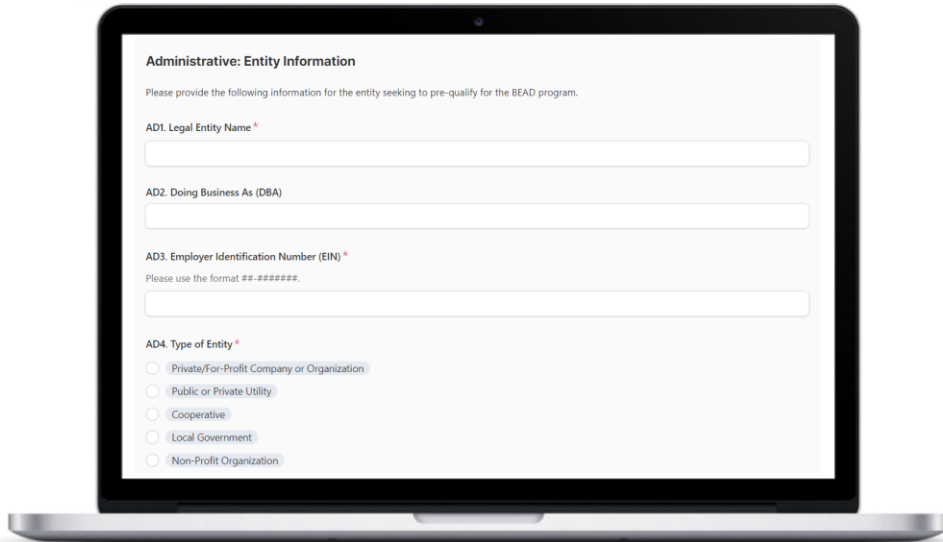
1c

Draft narrative responses and compile required attachments

Step 2

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Access the *Pre-qualification Submission Form* and enter administrative / contact information



Administrative: Entity Information

Please provide the following information for the entity seeking to pre-qualify for the BEAD program.

AD1. Legal Entity Name *

AD2. Doing Business As (DBA)

AD3. Employer Identification Number (EIN) *

Please use the format ##-####.

AD4. Type of Entity *

- Private/For-Profit Company or Organization
- Public or Private Utility
- Cooperative
- Local Government
- Non-Profit Organization

2a

Provide information on the legal entity name, EIN, and type of entity

2b

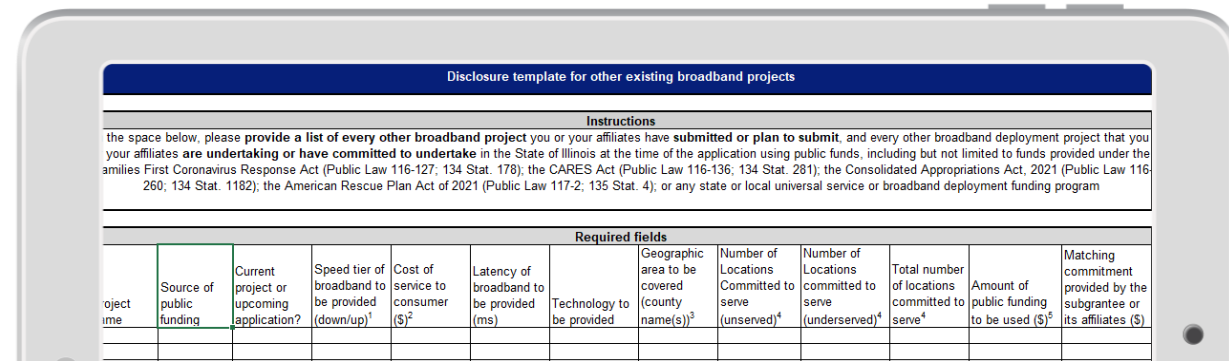
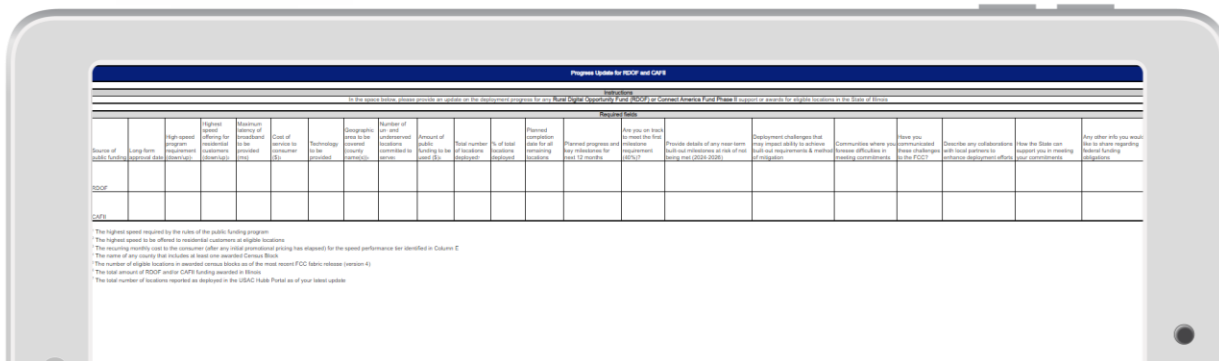
Fill out the following information for a primary and secondary contact

- Name
- Job Title
- Email Address
- Phone Number

Step 3

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Download and complete the *Existing Broadband Projects Template*



Download the “Existing Broadband Projects Template” Excel file by visiting the pre-qualification website

Tab 1 Progress update on RDOF and CAF II

For RDOF and CAF II support, provide information on the status of deployment in Illinois

Tab 2 Other Existing Broadband Projects

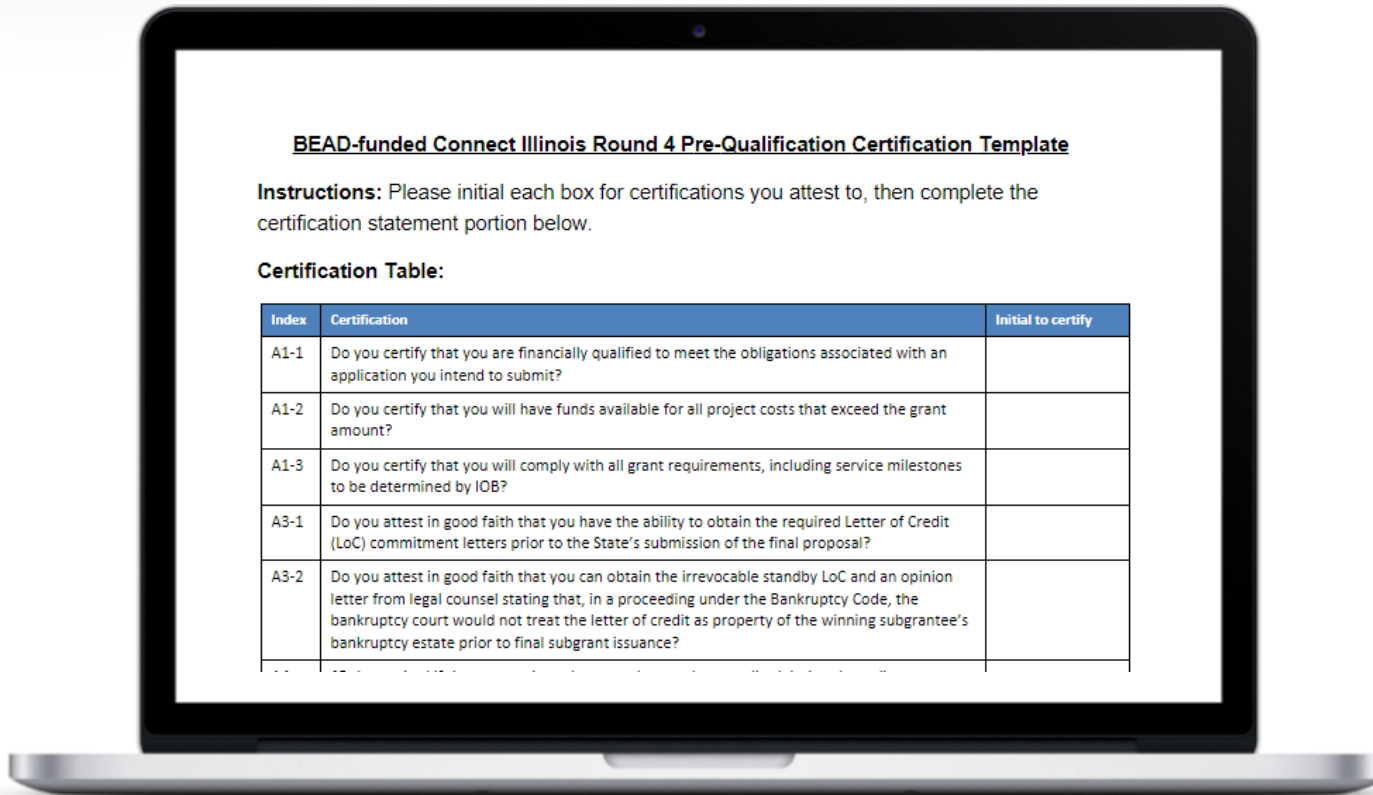
Complete a new row for each project currently funded or to be funded with public funds

Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details

Step 3

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Download and complete the *Certification Template*



3a

Download the certification form from the [pre-qualification website](#)

3b

Initial each certification and sign the attestation at the end of the document

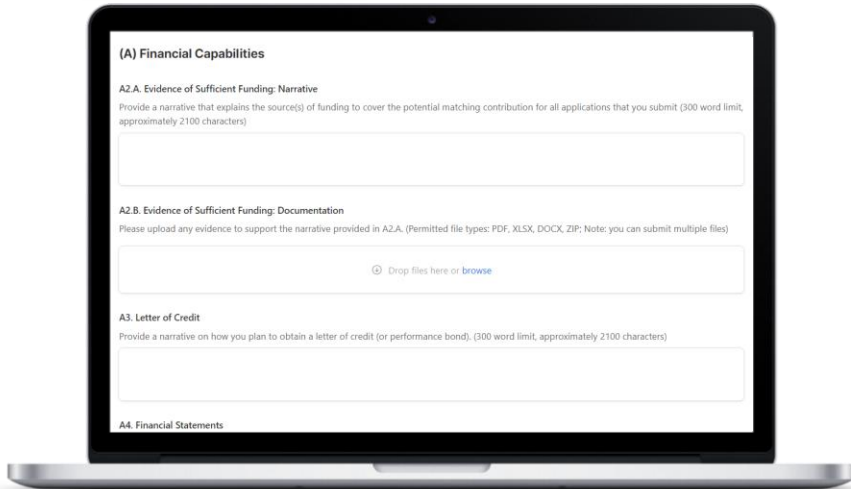
3c

Upload the signed copy to the submission form

Step 4

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Answer all questions on the submission form and upload relevant attachments for documentation requests



There are *seven* qualification requirements

- A Financial capabilities
- B Managerial capabilities
- C Technical capabilities
- D Legal and regulatory compliance
- E Operational capabilities
- F Ownership
- G Stewardship of other public funding

See the next pages for examples of documentation required for each qualification

Step 4 Deep dive

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Examples of documentation required for each qualification (1/2)

ILLUSTRATIVE NON-EXHAUSTIVE

| Qualification category | Qualification | Example documentation required | Additional details |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| A Financial capabilities | Financial statements | Financial statements from the prior fiscal year that are audited by an independent, certified public accountant | Financial statements if audited. If not audited, provide unaudited statements and certify ability to provide within 90 days of award notification |
| B Managerial capabilities | Résumés | Résumés for key management and operational personnel | ~5-7 résumés for essential financial, technical, and managerial personnel who will be supporting project implementation |
| C Technical capabilities | Technical qualifications | Certification and evidence that prospective subgrantees are technically qualified to complete and operate the project and are capable of carrying out the funded activities competently | Explanation on how prospective subgrantee will retain technical experience Evidence may include endorsements from prior partners or certifications from reputable institutions |

Step 4
Deep dive

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Examples of documentation required for each qualification (2/2)

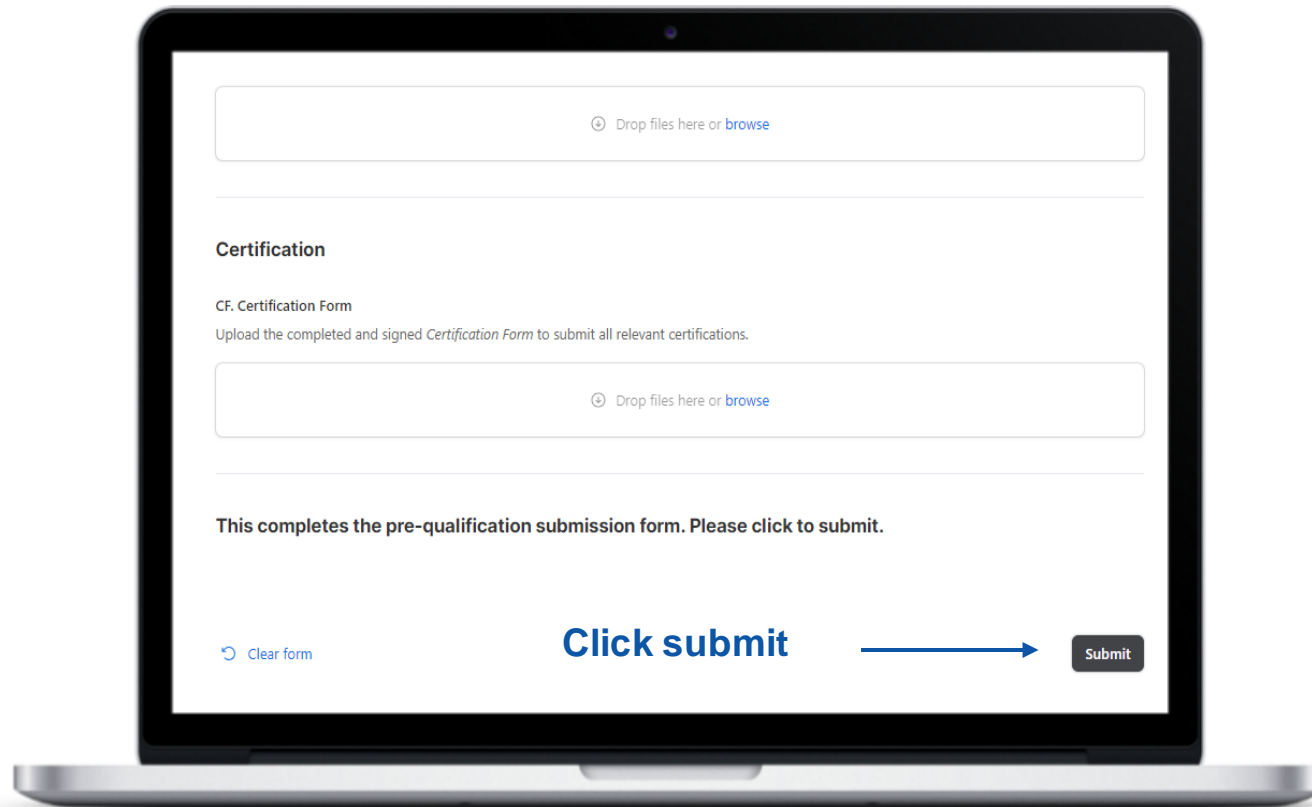
ILLUSTRATIVE NON-EXHAUSTIVE

| Qualification category | Qualification | Example documentation required | Additional details |
|--|--------------------------|--|---|
| D Legal and regulatory compliance | History of compliance | Detailed history of compliance with all federal, state, and local laws for previous broadband projects in the last three years | If not in compliance for a project, documentation is needed of the violation and the mitigating action |
| E Operational capabilities | Timely FCC submission | Certification and evidence that the FCC Form 477 and Broadband DATA Act reports were submitted on time | Only relevant for prospective subgrantees that have provided a voice and/or broadband service |
| F Ownership information | Ownership disclosure | List of the real party or parties with interest in the prospective subgrantee or application | List should include a complete disclosure of the identity and relationship of those persons or entities that directly or indirectly own and/or control the prospective subgrantee |
| G Stewardship of other public funding | Other broadband projects | Every broadband deployment project currently undertaking or committed to undertake in IL using public funds | Disclosure template – deep dive to follow |

Step 5

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Submit the pre-qualification submission form



Step 6

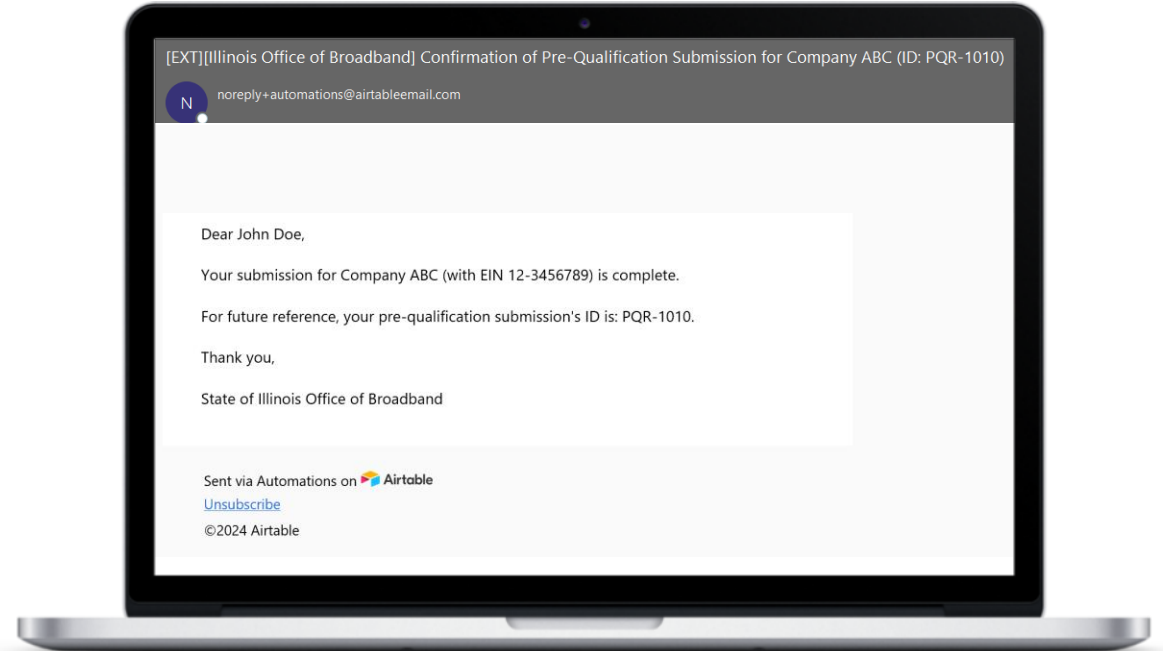
Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials

Confirm submission completion and check email for confirmation

Submission completion page



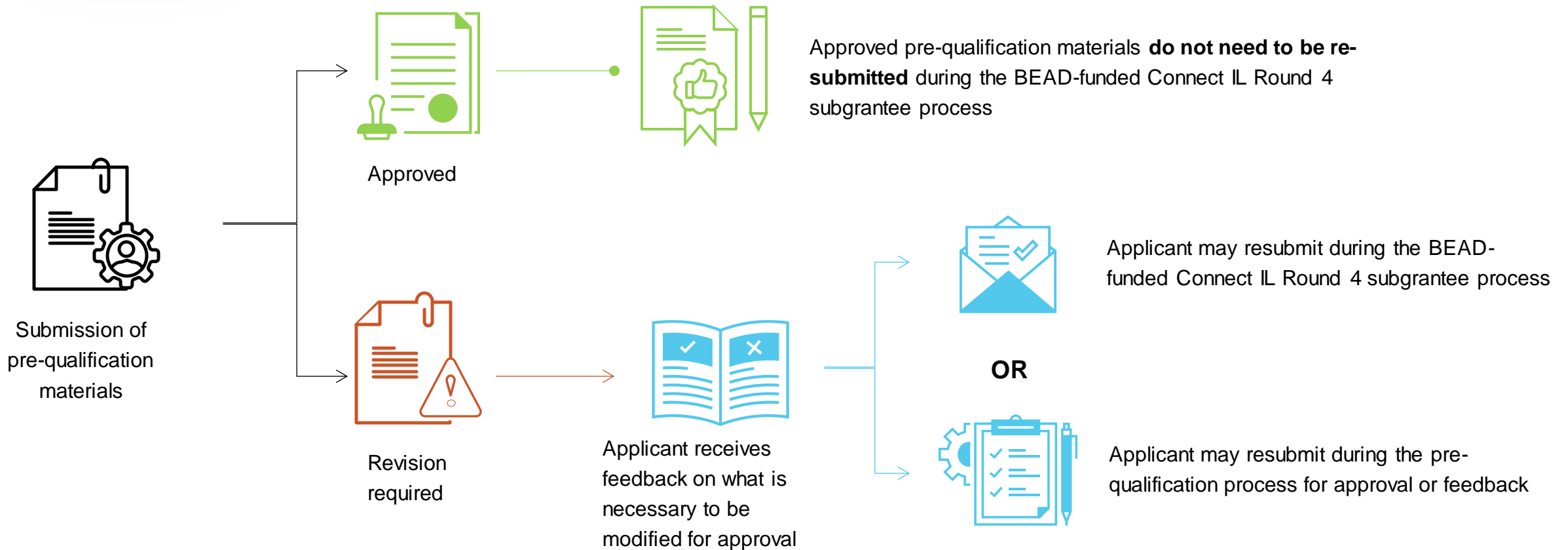
Submission email confirmation



Step 7

Step-by-step guide to submitting pre-qualification materials Review feedback/approval notice and address feedback, if needed

Recall: There are two outcomes possible from the pre-qualification process



Live Demo: Pre-qualification Submission Form



Connect Illinois Round 4 Pre-Qualification Submission Form

Welcome!

Please use this form to submit pre-qualification materials for the BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 grant program.

The pre-qualification process allows prospective subgrantees to familiarize themselves with BEAD requirements, receive early feedback from the Illinois Office of Broadband (IOB) on their qualification materials, and mitigate risk and potential delays.

The IOB is accepting pre-qualification materials between June 17, 2024 and July 23, 2024. For priority review, submit your materials by July 9, 2024.

Before proceeding:

- Please review the *Pre-Qualification Guidebook* [<link to be inserted>](#) for detailed information on the pre-qualification process and pre-qualification materials requested.
- Prepare all documents for submission before starting to upload.
- You can submit **all** or a **subset** of the materials requested. Only fields with an asterisk (*) are required for submission.
- If you are submitting refined materials per IOB feedback, please check your confirmation email for your previous submission ID, starting with "PQR-

4

Next steps

Next Steps for the Pre-qualification Process

Questions? Reach out to:
broadband@Illinois.gov



View the pre-qualification process website

Learn more about the process, view announcements and updates, and download relevant materials on the [IOB pre-qualification website](#)



Read the Pre-qualification Submission Guidebook

Download the [submission guide](#) for full details and FAQs of the pre-qualification process



Download and fill template attachments

Download the [Disclosure Template for Other Broadband Projects](#) and the [Certification Template](#) from the IOB website



Submit your response before July 9 (priority) or July 23 (regular)

Submit your pre-qualification materials via the [submission form](#)



Sign up to be an Illinois Office of Broadband Partner

Sign up as Illinois Office of Broadband Partner via the [intake form](#)



Appendix

Potential consideration factors in the determination of hard-to-serve PAUs



Context on hard-to-serve PAUs

- To further the goal of connecting all Illinoisans, the IOB has chosen to implement a **three-wave approach** for the subgrantee process
- Wave 1** of subgrantee process will be focused on **hard-to-serve areas** and only the applications including sufficient hard-to serve areas will be processed

Consideration factors

Impacted areas

| | |
|---|--|
| A Proportion of BSLs that have had little provider interest in prior Connect Illinois grant rounds or federal grant rounds | To be further specified by the State |
| B Proportion of unserved BSLs | To be further specified by the State |
| C Whether the PAU is in Persistent Poverty Counties as defined by Census | Three impacted counties (Alexander, Jackson, and Pulaski County) |
| D Whether the PAU is in a High-Cost Area (HCA) as defined by NTIA | Six impacted CBGs |

Exact methodology to determine hard-to-serve PAUs to be finalized by the State prior to the start of the subgrantee process

There are three documentation types relevant for submitting pre-qualification materials

There are three documentation types



Attachment

Prospective subgrantees will need to upload a document or complete a template document and upload to the form



Narrative

Prospective subgrantees will need to provide a narrative description of the qualification directly in the submission form



Certification

Prospective subgrantees will need to attest to the certification statement **on the Certification Template** and upload a signed version (Step 4)

Instructions

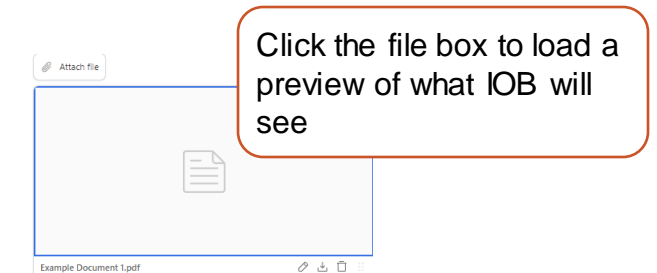
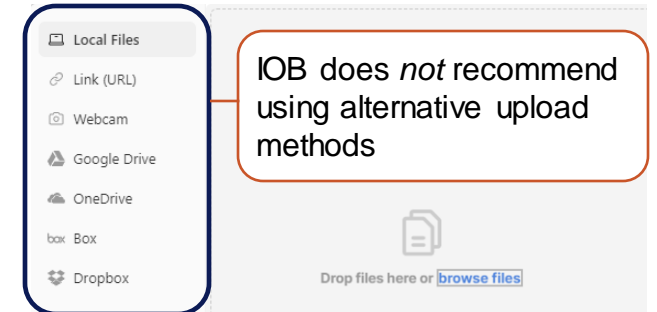
1

Drag and drop or click browse files to select one or multiple files

Document types allowed:
PDF, XLSX, DOCX,
JPEG, and PNG

2

Confirm all documents are uploaded by clicking on the popup to preview your submission



There are three documentation types relevant for submitting pre-qualification materials

There are three documentation types



Attachment

Prospective subgrantees will need to upload a document or complete a template document and upload to the form



Narrative

Prospective subgrantees will need to provide a narrative description of the qualification directly in the submission form



Certification

Prospective subgrantees will need to attest to the certification statement **on the Certification Template** and upload a signed version (Step 4)

Example

Content entered in the form will be saved in browser (if not in private browsing)

Please provide a narrative describing the experience and qualifications of key management for undertaking this project and the team's experience in undertaking projects of similar size and scope.

Paragraph

The form permits use of lists and formatting for long-form questions

There are three documentation types relevant for submitting pre-qualification materials

There are three documentation types



Attachment

Prospective subgrantees will need to upload a document or complete a template document and upload to the form



Narrative

Prospective subgrantees will need to provide a narrative description of the qualification directly in the submission form



Certification

Prospective subgrantees will need to attest to the certification statement **on the Certification Template** and upload a signed version (Step 4)

Instructions

To complete qualifications which require certification documentation, the submitter should initial the box next to the certification on the **Certification Template**

BEAD-funded Connect Illinois Round 4 Pre-Qualification Certification Template

Instructions: Please initial each box for certifications you attest to, then complete the certification statement portion below.

Certification Table:

| Index | Certification | Initial to certify |
|-------|--|--------------------|
| A1-1 | Do you certify that you are financially qualified to meet the obligations associated with an application you intend to submit? | |
| A1-2 | Do you certify that you will have funds available for all project costs that exceed the grant amount? | |
| A1-3 | Do you certify that you will comply with all grant requirements, including service milestones to be determined by ISB? | |
| A2-1 | Do you attest in good faith that you have the ability to obtain the required Letter of Credit (LOC) commitment letters prior to the State's submission of the final proposal? | |
| A3-2 | Do you attest in good faith that you can obtain the irrevocable standby LC 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 subgrantee issuance? | |
| A4 | (Only required if the prospective subgrantee has not been audited during the ordinary course of business) 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 formal award notification? | |
| C1 | Do you certify that you are technically qualified to complete and operate the project you will propose? | |
| C2 | Do you certify that you will use an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce? | |

QR to be modified



Scan here or visit the pre-qual information website to access the Certification Template



(A) Financial Capabilities

Type of documentation

- Narrative
- Attachment
- Certification

CONTENTS ABBREVIATED - REFER TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR FULL DETAILS

| Qualification | Description of documentation | Examples |
|--|--|---|
| A1 Financial certification | Subgrantees must certify they have the financial means to comply and execute the program | Statement in Certification Template |
| A2 Evidence of sufficient funding | Narrative and evidence that subgrantees will have sufficient financial resources to cover the eligible cost of the project | Cash on balance sheet, credit lines, equity commitments |
| A3 Letter of credit (LoC) | Narrative on how subgrantees plan to obtain a letter of credit (or performance bond) | The names of banks / entities the applicant plans to enlist and the estimated timeline to obtain LoC documentation |
| A4 Financial statements | Financial statements from the prior fiscal year that is audited by an independent, certified public accountant | Financial statements if audited. If not audited, provide unaudited statements and certify ability to provide within 90 days of award notification |

Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details.

(B) Managerial capabilities

Type of documentation

- Narrative
- Attachment
- Certification

CONTENTS ABBREVIATED - REFER TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR FULL DETAILS

Qualification

Description of documentation

Examples

B1 **Résumés**

Résumés for key management and operational personnel

~5-7 résumés for essential financial, technical, and managerial personnel who will be supporting project implementation

B2 **Organizational chart(s)**

Organizational charts for personnel and entity structure

Personnel org chart including all personnel supporting project implementation
Entity structure organizational chart including relevant parent, subsidiary, affiliate companies

B3 **Managerial readiness**

Narrative of managerial readiness to manage a broadband services network

Description of experience and qualifications of key management personnel
Description of team's experience in previous projects of similar scope

Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details.

(C) Technical capabilities

Type of documentation

● Narrative
 ● Attachment
 ● Certification

CONTENTS ABBREVIATED - REFER TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR FULL DETAILS

Qualification

Description of documentation

Examples

C1 Technical qualifications



Certification and evidence that prospective subgrantees are technically qualified to complete and operate the project and are capable of carrying out the funded activities competently

Explanation on how prospective subgrantees will retain technical expertise
 Evidence may include endorsements from prior partners or certifications from reputable institutions

C2 Use of skilled and credentialed workforce

Certification that prospective subgrantees will use an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce

Statement in Certification Template

Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details.

(D) Legal and regulatory compliance

Type of documentation

- Narrative
- Attachment
- Certification

CONTENTS ABBREVIATED - REFER TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR FULL DETAILS

Qualification

Description of documentation

Examples

D1 History of compliance



Detailed history of compliance with all federal, state, and local laws for previous broadband projects in the last three years

Statement in Certification Template

If not in compliance for a project, documentation is needed of the violation and the mitigating action

D2 Commitment to comply with all laws



Detailed commitment to comply with all federal, state, and local laws (such as procurement, environmental, preservation and labor)

Statement in Certification Template

Narrative and documentation of established processes, procedures, or protocols to ensure continued compliance

Occupational safety and health regulations



Narrative and evidence of compliance with occupational safety and health requirements
Subgrantees must permit workers to create worker-led health and safety committees

Describe organizational policies and how they will ensure workplace safety committees

Documentation that relevant training programs are in place (schedules, modules, etc.)






Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details.

(E) Operational capabilities

Type of documentation

 Narrative  Attachment  Certification

CONTENTS ABBREVIATED - REFER TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR FULL DETAILS

| Entity type | Qualification | Description of documentation | Examples |
|---|--|---|---|
| Provided voice, broadband, or electric services |  Years of Service  | Certification that attests to these facts and specifies the number of years the prospective subgrantee or its parent company has been operating | Statement in Certification Template |
| Provided voice, or broadband service |  Timely FCC Submission | Certification and evidence that the FCC Form 477 and Broadband DATA Act were submitted on time | Email or screenshot confirmations/verifications |
| Provided electric service |  Timely submission to relevant institutions | Operating or financial reports that the applicant has filed on time Certification attesting accuracy of reports | RUS Form 7, RUS Form 12, CFC Form 7, CFC Form 12, CoBank Form 7 |
| New Entrants |  Operational capabilities | Demonstration that newly formed entity has obtained sufficient operational capabilities | Résumés from key personnel, project descriptions or narratives from partners with relevant experience |

Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details.



(F) Ownership

Type of documentation

● Narrative
 ● Attachment
 ● Certification

CONTENTS ABBREVIATED - REFER TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR FULL DETAILS

F1 Ownership information with the requirements set forth in 47 C.F.R. 1.2112(a)(1)-(7)

The applicant (or if applying as a consortium, each participant in the consortium) in the submission¹ must:

- 1 List the **real party or parties with interest in the applicant** or application
- 2 List the **name, address, and citizenship of any party holding 10 percent or more of stock in the applicant**
- 3 For LPs, the name, address, and citizenship of each limited partner whose interest in the applicant is 10 percent or greater
For GPs, the name, address, and citizenship of each partner and their share or interest participation in the partnership.
For LLCs, the name, address, and citizenship of each of its members whose interest in the applicant is 10 percent or greater.
- 4 List all parties **holding indirect ownership interests in the applicant equal to or exceeding 10 percent**
- 5 **List any FCC-regulated entity or applicant for an FCC license who owns 10 percent or more of stock**

1. Submission is a narrative with the ability to upload supporting documentation
Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details.



(G) Stewardship of other public funding

Type of documentation

- Narrative
- Attachment
- Certification

CONTENTS ABBREVIATED - REFER TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR FULL DETAILS

| Qualification | Description of documentation | Examples |
|--|--|---|
| G1 Lack of Federal Debarment | Attestation whether prospective subgrantee has ever been federally debarred | Indication on form Explanation of federal debarment |
| G2 Previous history of incomplete projects | List of all publicly funded awards issued in last five years where they have been suspended, terminated, rescinded, or not completed | Identification and explanation of cause for all such publicly funded awards |
| G3 Disclosure of other broadband projects in State of IL | Every broadband deployment project currently undertaking or committed to undertake in IL using public funds | Disclosure template |
| G4 Progress update on federal broadband awards in State of IL | If prospective subgrantee has received federal funding, an update on the process to date for projects using RDOF or CAF II federal funds | Disclosure template |

Note: Please refer to the pre-qualification submission guide for full details.