Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program FAQs

Answers are provided for the reference of all subgrantee applicants; questions have been condensed, consolidated, and edited for clarity.

Application Phase

1. Are the maps finalized from the Challenge Process? If not, when will these be finalized? I presume we can't design projects until the location map is fully solidified, since it is subject to change.
Results from the BEAD Challenge Process have been submitted to NTIA; WBO is awaiting approval. Once NTIA approves the results, WBO will release the location map and data along with subgrantee application materials.

If WBO does not receive NTIA approval of its BEAD Challenge Process results before the planned opening of WBO's Subgrantee Application Phase, WBO will publish preliminary Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL) data seven days before the Subgrantee Application Phase begins. Then, when NTIA approves the Challenge Process results, WBO will publish a final version of the BSL data. At that point, WBO will also extend the Subgrantee Application Phase window if needed to allow subgrantee applicants enough time to complete their project designs.

2. When will WBO release benchmark pricing for each project area?
WBO will release the benchmark pricing seven days before the opening of the Subgrantee Application Phase to provide subgrantee applicants sufficient time to review and design project areas.

3. If an entity submits an application that uses a blend of fiber and fixed wireless solutions, would that application be scored as a non-priority application?
Yes. Only projects that are end-to-end fiber will be considered "Priority Broadband Projects." As defined by the BEAD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

> "The term 'Priority Broadband Project' means a project that will provision service via end-to-end fiber-optic facilities to each end-user premises. An Eligible Entity may disqualify any project that might otherwise qualify as a Priority Broadband Project from Priority Broadband Project status, with the approval of the Assistant Secretary, on the basis that the location surpasses the Eligible Entity's Extremely High Cost Per Location Threshold… or for other valid reasons subject to approval by the Assistant Secretary."[1]

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[1] "BEAD NOFO," NTIA, https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/BEAD%20NOFO.pdf (at p. 14).

For further explanation on scoring and prioritization of such projects, see Section 2.4.2 of Wyoming's Initial Proposal Volume II.[2]

4. Do we need to supply a Letter of Credit Certification during the Application Phase?
Yes. During the Application Phase, subgrantee applicants are required to provide either a letter of credit or performance bond from their financial institution. For guidance, please see Section 2.4.11.3 of Wyoming's Initial Proposal Volume II.[3]

5. Where can I find the benchmark spreadsheet?
The Wyoming BEAD Benchmark Spreadsheet is available on the WBO BEAD webpage under Grant Application Materials: https://wyomingbusiness.org/broadband/bead/.

6. If an area or parts of an area get funded by the USDA ReConnect Round 5 program, will those locations be made ineligible for BEAD funding?
Yes. Between now and its submittal of the Final Proposal to NTIA, WBO will publish locations served through ReConnect upon notification or certification that the grants have been completed. WBO will also review and remove locations served through Capital Projects Fund (CPF) grants under the Connect Wyoming program and any other grant-funded programs with enforceable commitments. WBO will publish locations deemed ineligible for BEAD funding as they are verified.

7. When will the maps be available? I understood that preliminary maps would be available for preview seven days before the application portal opening date.
Due to the time required to build maps based on the Project Area Units, WBO is not able to provide preliminary maps seven days before the application opening date of October 21. However, WBO plans to make maps available on October 21. In the meantime, all the data for eligible location and Project Area Unit identifier and benchmark pricing are now available on the WBO BEAD webpage under Grant Application Materials: https://wyomingbusiness.org/broadband/bead/.

8. Are multiple applications allowed?
Yes. You can combine Project Area Units into a single application. You can also apply for them individually. For more details, please see the September 23 webinar, BEAD Grant Program Design, accessible from the WBO BEAD webpage under BEAD Grant Application Webinar Recordings: https://wyomingbusiness.org/broadband/bead/.

9. Can you explain the difference between Project Area Units and Census Block Groups?
WBO's Subgrantee Application will utilize Project Area Units (PAU) as the foundational geographic unit. The PAUs are constructed to aggregate unserved and underserved locations within a Census Block Group (CBG) into smaller units. Multiple PAUs may be part of a CBG. For more details, please see the

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[2] "Initial Proposal Volume II," WBO, https://wyomingbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Wyoming-BEAD-Initial-Proposal-Volume-II-Approved.pdf (at p. 45).
[3] "Initial Proposal Volume II," WBO, https://wyomingbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Wyoming-BEAD-Initial-Proposal-Volume-II-Approved.pdf (at p. 69).

September 23 webinar, BEAD Grant Program Design, accessible from the WBO BEAD webpage under BEAD Grant Application Webinar Recordings: https://wyomingbusiness.org/broadband/bead/.

10. The published list of locations didn't include information on the serviceability of locations. Should subgrantee applicants use the current list of Challenge Process results as a reference for serviceability of locations?

Yes, subgrantee applicants should use the latest eligible location results until WBO has received NTIA approval on the final list of eligible locations. While the current list of eligible locations has FCC IDs only, subgrantee applicants can use their Tier D license to match the needed latitude/longitude information and serviceability type from the CostQuest fabric. To access eligible location data, select Eligible Locations from the WBO BEAD webpage, accessible under BEAD Grant Application Materials: https://wyomingbusiness.org/broadband/bead/.

11. Why did Question 3.9 for Non-Priority or Alternative Technology subgrantee applicants change from asking if the network could reliably deliver at least 250/50 Mbps to now asking if the network can reliably deliver at least 100/20 Mbps?

The original version of Question 3.9 incorrectly referenced a speed of 250/50 Mbps. Question 3.9 has been updated to reference the BEAD baseline speed requirement for Reliable Broadband Service of 100/20 Mbps. Subgrantee applicants are required to select "Yes" or "No" from the dropdown menu.

12. What is the updated guidance for Question 3.9A for Non-Priority and Alternative Technology subgrantee applicants and why was this update made?

For Question 3.9A, subgrantee applicants are now required to include in the first sentence of their narrative response the tier of service speeds their network can reliably deliver while maintaining latency of no more than 100 ms. This additional information helps WBO score subgrantee applicants in the "Speed of network and other technical capabilities" category in the Subgrantee Selection Scoring Rubric. Speed tiers and corresponding scores are listed below:

Speed tier 1	100/20 Mbps up to 500/20 Mbps	0 points
Speed tier 2	500/20 Mbps up to 1 Gbps/35 Mbps	2 points
Speed tier 3	1 Gbps/35 Mbps or higher	5 points

For a subgrantee applicant to receive these points, the state's evaluation must confirm that the proposed network design can deliver the above performance levels to all eligible locations within an application, including a reasonable assessment of how the proposed network can scale by adding incremental capacity in a cost-effective manner as new customers are added. For more information about scoring, download the rubric (see the "Scoring Rubric – Non-Priority" tab: https://wyomingbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/BEAD-Initial-Proposal_Volume-II_Subgrantee-Selection-Scoring-Rubric-Approved.xlsx).

13. Question 2.7 asks how many people we have hired for this project. Is this asking how many people we have employed who will work on the projects or is it asking how many people we have hired specifically to cover BEAD projects?

Provide an estimate for the number of people, and in what roles, you have hired or intend to hire for this project only. Do not include personal contact information (e.g., home address, personal phone number) in your response.

The response should detail the anticipated number of personnel that will be hired to carry out the project and should also detail the roles for which the personnel will be hired. If you have hired or will hire additional people to cover multiple BEAD projects, of which this project is one, you may use a percentage based on the amount of time the person will work on this project.

Upload the response as a file in PDF, Word, or Excel format to the portal. The file name must include "2-7-project-roles" to be accepted by the portal.

14. Is there a BEAD map user guide?

Yes. The BEAD Program Broadband Map Guide, BEAD Application Map, and Map PAU Data File are all available from the WBO BEAD Application Map webpage:
https://broadband.wyomingbusiness.org/bead/bead-grant-application/bead-grant-application/.

15. There are locations in our PAUs that cannot be reached wirelessly or with fiber. Since we have to propose a solution for all locations in a PAU, the only other option will be satellite. The satellite design template requires the applicant to certify that it will meet the BEAD network requirements. Because our company does not operate our own satellite network, nor does it have resale agreements with satellite providers, we cannot attest to the performance of another provider's network. How should we navigate this scenario?

Subgrantee applicants must submit proposals that include all eligible locations within the Project Area Units (PAU) they are proposing, regardless of the difference between the proposed grant request and the PAU reference price. Subgrantee applicants must also submit proposals only for the applicable technology types (fiber, reliable broadband, or alternative technology) they can provide.

Given these requirements, WBO understands that a proposal may exceed the PAU reference price. This can be addressed in the Negotiation Phase, which allows WBO to work with subgrantee applicants to alter the terms of their proposals, including but not limited to descoping of high-cost locations. For PAUs that receive no proposals during the Subgrantee Application Phase, WBO will have the option of contacting prequalified ISPs (those approved in the BEAD Prequalification Phase) for direct negotiation. Therefore, a prequalified ISP could alternatively choose not to bid on a given PAU. In this case, the prequalified ISP would wait to see if WBO receives no proposals for the PAU, and if WBO does not receive proposals for the PAU, it would wait for WBO to reach out to them as a prequalified ISP for negotiation.

16. Can you clarify the requirements for the Professional Engineer providing the project certification?

The Professional Engineer providing the project certification must be licensed, though it is not required they be licensed in Wyoming. Per the NTIA Conditional Limited Programmatic Waiver and Clarification of

Professional Engineer Certification, issued in March 2024, the Professional Engineer's license may be in any of the 56 Eligible Entities.

17. Can you clarify the requirements for the attorney providing the legal opinion?
For issues and compliance related to Wyoming law and regulations, the attorney providing the legal opinion must have an active status with and no disciplinary charges pending or imposed public discipline from the Wyoming State Bar. For issues and compliance related to federal law and regulations, the attorney providing the legal opinion must have an active state law license with no disciplinary charges pending or imposed public discipline.

Portal

1. As an applicant, can I review the items uploaded after they have been uploaded? How can I double-check this? How do I replace or delete something I have already uploaded?
To review, replace, or delete your uploaded documents, please select "Step 3 – Document Management." After clicking on Step 3, select "Manage Files." The drop-down menu next to each file name will provide the option to edit/delete uploaded files as needed.

2. Regarding the naming requirements for the attached documents, are we able to add our company name or other text behind the required format?
Yes. We recommend using an underscore (_) or hyphen (-) to separate any additional language from the required portion of the file name.

3. Must I complete the entire application before I can manage documents? I am unable to access document management until everything is completed. Is that intended?
"Step 3 – Document Management" is a validation step, so it requires applicants to complete a certain portion of their applications. However, you can edit your responses as needed before submitting your application.