



## UNDERSTANDING THE BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS, AND DEPLOYMENT (BEAD) PREQUALIFICATION APPLICATION

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# MEET OUR TEAM

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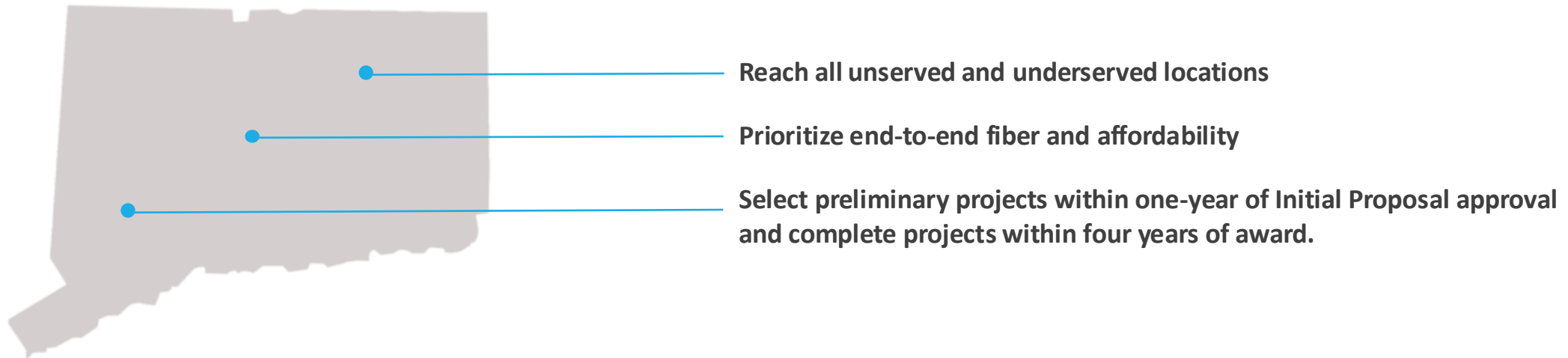
# AGENDA

1. BEAD Program Overview
2. Prequalification Background
3. Prequalification Application
4. Prequalification Highlights
5. Q&A

# BEAD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

# ABOUT THE BEAD PROGRAM

- Created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("IIJA" or "BIL")
- Allocated \$42.45 billion of federal funding to all 50 states, Washington D.C., and territories
- Administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
- **The goal is internet for all:** Expand high-speed internet access via infrastructure deployment & adoption programs

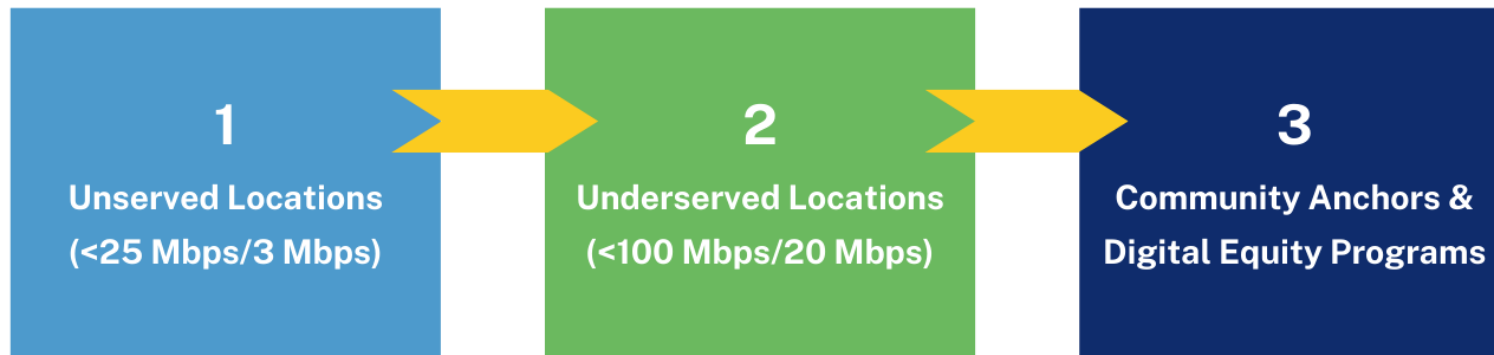


# BEAD PROGRAM BACKGROUND

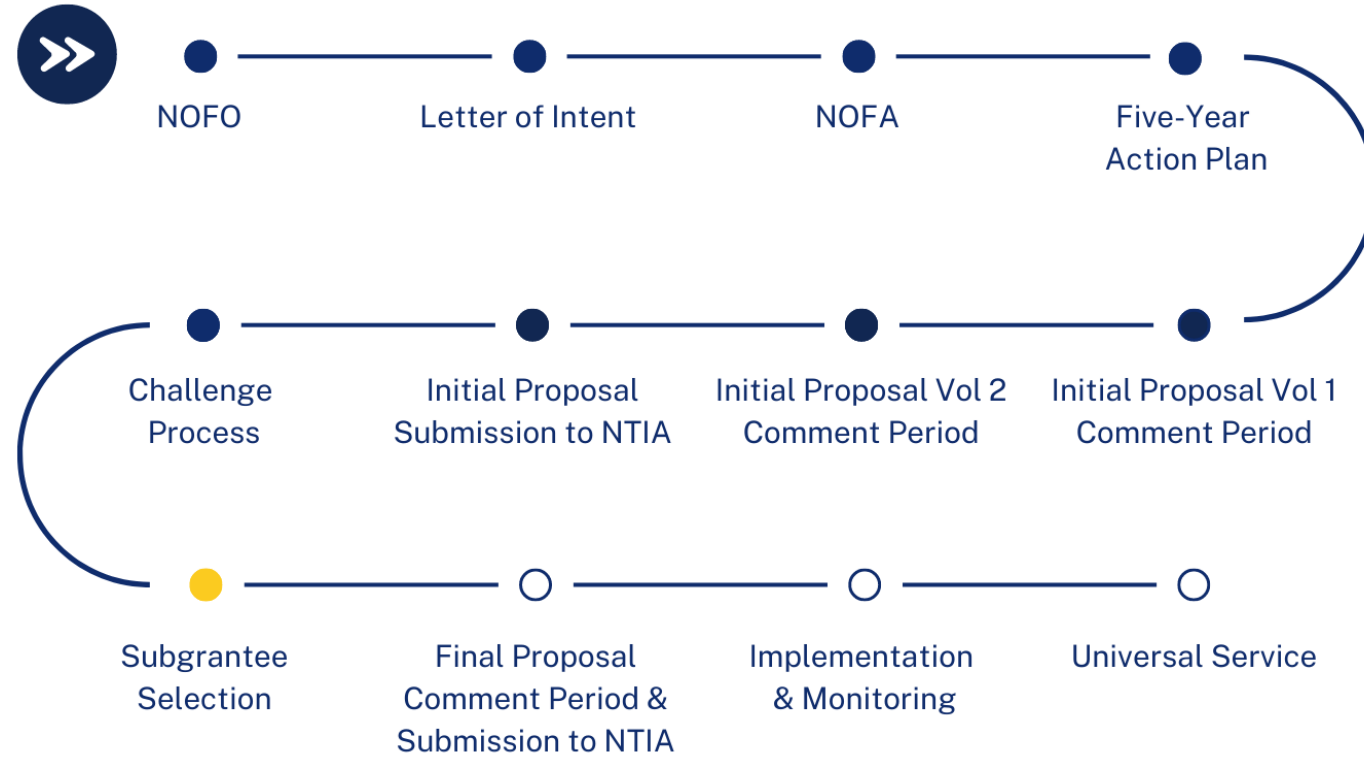
**The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment** (BEAD) Program is designed to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment, and adoption programs across the country.

**Connecticut will receive \$144 million** to improve broadband in the state via the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

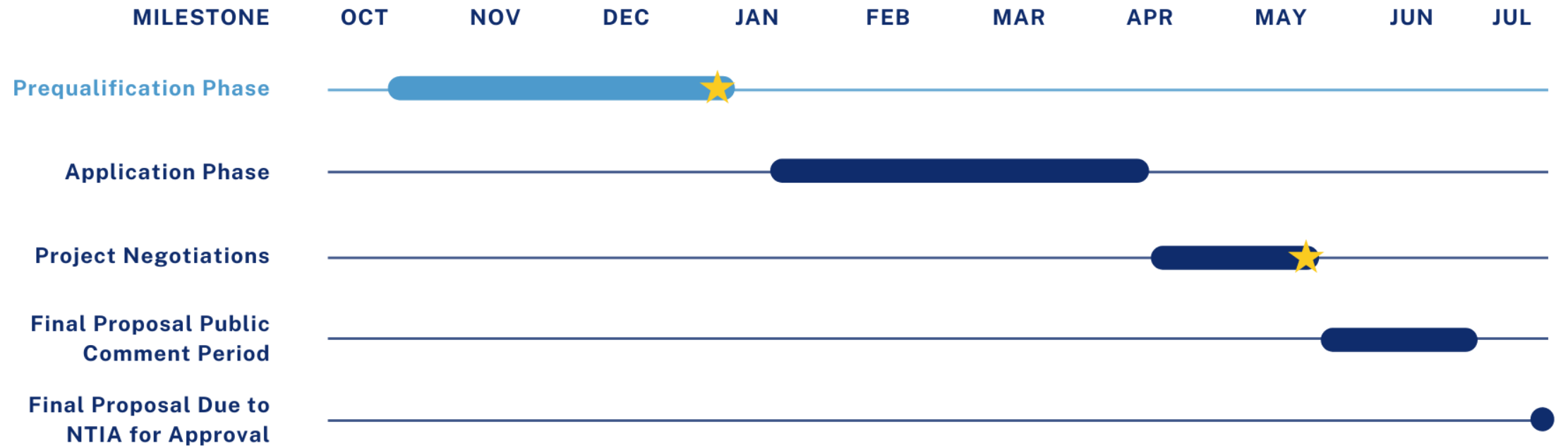
**The goal is to connect 100% of unserved and underserved locations** in the state with reliable, affordable broadband.



# BEAD PROGRAM MILESTONES



# PREQUALIFICATION & APPLICATION TIMELINE



★ Indicates preliminary announcements

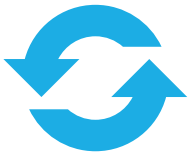


# PREQUALIFICATION BACKGROUND

# WHY ARE WE INCLUDING A PREQUALIFICATION PROCESS?



To give applicants time to prepare their financial and organizational capabilities in order to demonstrate their basic qualifications for BEAD subgrant eligibility.



To reduce the burden on applicants who might otherwise need to submit the same information multiple times during the application period if proposing multiple projects.



To foster a fair and transparent grant selection process with ample time for curing.

# WHAT DOES BEING PREQUALIFIED MEAN?



**DEEP will consider whether your prequalification application is:**

**1. Complete:**

Responses must be thorough and directly aligned with the request.

**2. Sufficient:**

The application must document compliance and adherence to the required standards and statutes.

**3. Demonstrative of Capabilities:**

The application must not have any omissions or indications that create concerns about the history or capabilities of potential subgrantees (including their contractors and subcontractors) in meeting the specified standards and statutes.

# WHY SHOULD YOU APPLY TO BE PREQUALIFIED?

**#1 Reason:** You must participate in Prequalification Process to apply for the BEAD Program.

- This is the only prequalification period DEEP expects to hold.
- Becoming prequalified does not obligate you to apply in the application phase.
- Participating in the prequalification period now will save you time on submitting applications later.

# IMPORTANT DATES

Milestone	Estimated Date
Prequalification Application Release Date	October 21
Questions for FAQ Deadline	October 30
Office Hour	November 6
FAQ Release	November 8
Prequalification Application Deadline	November 20
Application Reviews & Curing	November 21 – December 11
Announcement of Preliminary Determinations	Mid – Late December

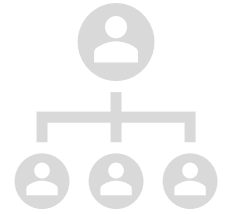
# PREQUALIFICATION APPLICATION

# MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The prequalification application collects documentation to ensure that minimum eligibility criteria, as established by the BEAD NOFO for the subgrantee selection process, are met:

1. **Financial capability:** Certifications and documentation, letter of credit compliance statement, audited financial statements
2. **Organizational capability:** Key management resumes, organizational charts, certification of operational readiness, evidence of prior service in relevant areas, compliance with regulatory filings
3. **Certifications and compliance:** Adherence to federal, state, and local laws, compliance with occupational safety regulations
4. **Federal labor and employment laws:** Adherence to federal labor and employment laws, documentation of labor and employment practices
5. **Risk management:** Cybersecurity and supply chain risk management plans, reevaluations, and updates
6. **Ownership:** Ownership information required by 47 C.F.R. § 1.2112(a)(1)-(7)

# WE ASK FOR: ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION



- **Organizational information chart** indicating key personnel, teams, and company structure
- **Resumes** of key personnel, including managerial, technical, financial, and operational positions
- **Ownership disclosure** (consistent with 47 C.F.R. § 1.2112(a)(1)-(7)), including ownership interest of 10% or more
- **Certifications and licenses** held by the business and individual employees, organized by role
- **Legal opinion acknowledgement** indicating your plan to comply in the Scoring Phase by submitting a letter signed by an attorney regarding your qualifications and past compliance with federal and state laws
- **SAM.gov registration** unique entity identifier (UEI)
  - An applicant does not need to complete full registration to receive a UEI
  - UEI must be active



# WE ASK FOR: FINANCIAL INFORMATION



- **Audited financial statements** from prior fiscal year or equivalent financial information (or a justification as to why such statements may not be available)
  - Audits must be completed by an independent certified public accountant
  - This can take several months to complete
- **A letter of commitment or performance bond acknowledgement** indicating your understanding of the BEAD Program's letter of credit or bond requirements and your plan for complying (see NTIA's guidance for more details BEAD Letter of Credit Waiver | BroadbandUSA (ntia.gov))
  - Letter of credit template:  
<https://www.usac.org/wp-content/uploads/high-cost/documents/fund/RDOF-Sample-Letter-of-Credit-Evergreen.pdf>
  - Performance bond examples:  
[https://surety.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NASBP-BEAD-Program\\_Full-Kit.pdf](https://surety.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NASBP-BEAD-Program_Full-Kit.pdf)

# WE ASK FOR: EXPERIENCE



- **Past performance on broadband projects** (especially those similar in size and scope to the anticipated BEAD project)
- **Other public funding that your organization or its affiliates have applied for or intend to apply for** (including federal and state funding such as ARPA, RDOF, CAF, CARES, Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program) for broadband deployment projects as well as project details for those public-funded projects including:
  - Project technology
  - Project area
  - Amount of funding requested
  - Amount of match committed
  - Proposed cost of end-user services

# OTHER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

- Awareness of and commitment to comply with **Environmental and National Historical Preservation** (EHP) compliance requirements from the **National Historic Preservation Act** and **National Environmental Policy Act**, including categorical exclusions, and **Build America, Buy America** (BABA) requirements.
- **Compliant supply chain and cybersecurity plans** including NIST Cybersecurity Framework Version 2.0, Executive Order 14028, NISTIR 8276, and NIST 800-161, or certify that the organization will have such.
- Acknowledgement of and plan for **federal and state employment and labor practices and compliance**.

# OTHER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

**For new entrants or applicants with less than two years of experience, evidence demonstrating sufficient operational capabilities, including:**

- Resumes and a list or chart from partner, contractor, or key personnel describing experience with operations providing broadband services
  - Must include licensing and certification identifiers, years of operating experience, and descriptions of the services provided
- Project descriptions and narratives from contractors, subcontractors, or other partners
- Other operational or financial reports that may have been originally submitted to a financial institution or regulatory agency
  - Must include a certification that the submission is a true and accurate copy of the reports

# PREQUALIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS

# PREPARING FOR PREQUALIFICATION

- ✓ Identify authorized organization representative and key application contacts
- ✓ Compile company name, address, TIN, contact information
- ✓ Collect financial statements and other documentation
- ✓ Identify key managerial staff, update resumes, and organizational charts
- ✓ Verify active registrations with the state and SAM.gov
- ✓ Identify projects of similar scope and/or size for past performance
- ✓ Ensure accurate ownership documentation
- ✓ Review BEAD NOFO, DEEP Initial Proposal Volume II, and other relevant documents

# SELECT APPLICABLE LAWS

**While DEEP cannot provide an exclusive or exhaustive list of applicable federal or state laws, it urges applicants to review and consider laws such as:**

- Connecticut's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) rules and regulations, including access to pole attachments and rights-of-way.
- State statutes related to broadband infrastructure deployment such as Conn Gen. Stat §16-233 (municipality access to public utility poles and conduit within the city limits)
- State statutes related to equitable access to broadband such as Conn. Public Act 21-159 (broadband availability mapping requirements and funding program obligations)
- Federal and state procurement laws including Buy American requirements, trade law obligations, foreign ownership disclosures and state contracting rules
- State and local permitting laws, rules, obligations, and authority
- Applicable federal Uniform Guidance regulations (2 C.F.R. Part 200)
- Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions for grant funding
- Federal and state environmental and historic preservation regulations
- Federal and state labor, worker safety, and wage laws, regulations, and executive orders, including the Occupational Safety and Health Act, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §3702, 3704), and Conn. Gen. Stat. §31-53 (state wage rate obligations as part of the construction, alteration, or repair of public works projects)

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

**REMEMBER: Potential BEAD applicants must participate in the prequalification process.**

- DEEP will not be scoring applicants based on what is submitted in the prequalification application, except for compliance with and commitment to Fair Labor Standards
- Prequalification applicants will be given opportunity to update or replace this information in the application for the scoring phase
- Some items submitted in the prequalification application may be reviewed during the Scoring Phase with the additional context provided by specific project applications
- Prequalification will help save time and resources, especially given the limited 365-day window set by NTIA for submission of the Final Proposal and Subgrantee Selection Process



# APPLICATION GUIDANCE & TEMPLATES

**BEAD Program PREQUALIFICATION PHASE**  
Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

**Application Portal Instructions**

**Instructions**  
Applications must be submitted via the application portal. The application guidance and additional resources can be found on DEEP's website: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Energy/Broadband-Deployment/BEAD-Program>. Questions may be submitted via email to DEEP.Broadband@ct.gov using the subject line "BEAD Portal Inquiry".

**Get Started**

- Use the opportunity link. The first time you access an opportunity through the Applicant Portal, you will be prompted to create a login and password. Alternatively, users may have received an email invitation from another user in their organization. Once you register, you will be able to access the opportunity.
- In the portal, click an open opportunity name.
- Click Apply to the right of the opportunity name.
- On the login screen, click Register.
- On the Create New Account page, add your user information, contact information, and organization information. All required fields are noted with an asterisk (\*). Note that each user must have a unique email address across all applicant portal accounts through AmpliFund.
- Click Register.

**Tips for Navigating the Application Portal**

- Invite users to your organization account. Go to the Applicant Portal > Click the Logo > Click Users > Click + User
- Application progress is displayed at the top of every page. You can also navigate to any page in the application by clicking the icon above the page's name in the progress bar.
- Be sure to save your progress by clicking "Save" or "Save and Continue" at the bottom of each application section.
- If a page is required for submission, an asterisk will appear next to the page name in the progress bar.
- Once your application has been submitted, you cannot add, edit, or delete any application information.

**ICONS**

- Completed
- Saved
- Incomplete
- Current Incomplete
- Current Saved or Complete

**BEAD Subgrantee Selection Process and Timeline**

DEEP is planning a multi-step process for selecting subgrantees and making BEAD fund awards:

- Prequalification Phase:** DEEP will begin with prequalification of applicants.
  - Prequalification Materials Released
  - Applications Accepted & Reviewed
  - Announcement of Prequalification Determinations
- Scoring Phase:** DEEP will issue a grant application and accept and score grant applications from prequalified applicants for specific projects.
  - Application Materials Released
  - Applications Accepted & Reviewed
  - Applications Cured & Scored
- Negotiations Phase:** DEEP will then proceed to negotiations with the highest-scoring applicants and make provisional grant awards.
  - Project Negotiations
  - Additional Review & Curing as Needed
  - Preliminary Selection Announcements

DEEP will include the provisional grant awards in its draft BEAD Final Proposal, which it will submit to NTIA for review and approval. Upon NTIA's approval of DEEP's Final Proposal, DEEP will finalize BEAD subgrantee grant agreements.

The following is the tentative schedule for the Prequalification Process:

Milestone	Dates
Prequalification Webinar & Application Materials Released	October 21, 2024
Questions for FAQ Deadline	October 30, 2024
Office Hour	November 6, 2024
FAQ Release	November 8, 2024
Prequalification Application Deadline	November 20, 2024
Application Reviews & Curing	November 21, 2024 - December 11, 2024
Announcement of Prequalification Determinations	Estimated December 17, 2024

**BEAD PROGRAM: PREQUALIFICATION PHASE**

**FINANCIAL CAPABILITY**  
Applicants will be expected to demonstrate financial expertise, capabilities, and available resources to meet program requirements and successfully complete a funded project.

Financial Statements	Response Type
If the applicant has unqualified financial statements audited by an independent certified public accountant from the prior fiscal year, a copy of the unqualified audited financial statements from the prior year.	Upload
If the applicant has qualified audited financial statements from the previous fiscal year, a copy of the qualified audited financial statements from the previous year AND a description and explanation regarding why unqualified statements were unavailable, the reason for the qualification, and measures taken to address the qualifications.	Upload & Textbox
If the applicant's audited financial statements for FY23 are currently unavailable but will be available soon, please provide this application: 1. Does applicant commit to submitting audited financial statements for the prior year within eight months of the date of information as audited statements; 2. Provide one year of interim unqualified financial statements that contain substantially the same level of detail and an estimated date for providing the audited financial statements.	Upload & Textbox
If the applicant has unqualified financial statements audited by an independent certified public accountant from the prior fiscal year, a copy of the unqualified audited financial statements from the prior year.	Upload & Textbox
If applicant is a public entity and does not prepare audited financial statements, applicant must: 1. Provide relevant and applicable financial documentation that provides substantially similar information to substantiate applicant's financial qualifications and capabilities to participate in the program; and 2. An explanation of the financial documentation, Applicant will provide a certification in the certifications template that the documentation provided is true and correct.	Upload & Textbox
<b>Letter of Credit</b> Provide a description of how the applicant plans to meet the requirements for a letter of credit or performance bond, including whether the applicant intends to make use of any of the alternative options, in alignment with the instructions in the BEAD NOFO as updated by the BEAD Letter of Credit Waiver (11/01/23, NTIA Notice of Programmatic Waiver, <a href="https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Energy/Broadband-Deployment/BEAD-Program/BEAD-Letter-of-Credit-Waiver">https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Energy/Broadband-Deployment/BEAD-Program/BEAD-Letter-of-Credit-Waiver</a> ). In the certifications template, the applicant will certify awareness, understanding, qualifications, and resources regarding the letter of credit or performance bond obligations and processes.	Upload & Textbox
<b>Certifications</b> Provide other required certifications related to financial capability in the Certifications Template. There is one certifications template for the entire prequalification application, and it is linked at the end of each section of the application. The applicant will be required to upload the completed certifications template at the end of the application.	Certifications Template

# Q&A



Contact:

**DEEP.BROADBAND@CT.GOV**