Broadband Buildout Initiative – Apply by August 5, 2024

This Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas program supports communities that have existing plans for a broadband infrastructure project but face difficulties completing it, due to limitations on technical expertise or challenges with financing.

Participants will receive technical assistance and guidance to help fund and execute their projects successfully. This may include help to review infrastructure plans, partner with internet service providers (ISPs) or find sources of funding.

Eligibility

Applicants must be working on broadband infrastructure projects in small or mid-size communities or rural areas. They must meet the following criteria:

- **Location:** Eleventh Federal Reserve District (Texas, southern New Mexico and northern Louisiana)
- **Organization:** Established community partnership working on digital inclusion
- **Project:** Broadband infrastructure project ready for implementation that will serve a smaller-size community (less than 100,000 households)

Program overview

The Dallas Fed and its nonprofit partner, Connect Humanity, will provide technical guidance to selected community partnerships that are working on broadband projects in underserved areas. The target outcome is a network deployment that is accessible, affordable and integrated with community anchors.

Assistance will be tailored to help each team achieve their project goals, in areas such as partnering with ISPs, economic business planning or financing strategies.

Participants will meet with technical advisers monthly and engage with peers in the program. Most meetings will be virtual. For in-person meetings, travel expenses will be covered.

The program is expected to begin in October 2024 and continue into 2025.

Information session

[Updated Aug. 6, 2024: Link to recording added]

To learn more about the program and application process, view the recording of our July 10 open forum for prospective applicants.
Application timeline

- Information session: July 10, 2024
- Applications due: August 5, 2024
- Selection announcement: September 2024

Selection process

The selection committee will consist of members of the Dallas Fed’s digital inclusion advisory committee. The Dallas Fed does not participate in the selection of program participants.

All applications submitted by August 5 will be considered. Exception: Only one application will be accepted per community. For instance, a community could not apply on its own and also as part of a separate regional application.

After initial review, some applicants will be invited to interview, beginning in late August. Final selections will be announced in September.

In selecting participants, priority is given to applicants who demonstrate potential to leverage the technical assistance provided by the program to see a broadband project through to completion.

Successful applicants should have:

- Feasibility study or business plan completed (financial modeling, network design, and construction/operations plan).
- Formal partnership established with a commitment to the project and key partners in place for implementation.
- Local leader (community champion or broadband advocate) who can drive the project forward.
- Focus on providing broadband access to rural, unserved or historically underserved communities.

How to apply

[Updated Aug. 6, 2024: Link to application removed]

Complete our online form and upload documents. All applications are due by August 5, 2024.

Application details

The list below provides a summary of the items you will need to complete the application. See the online form for full details.
Note: Items listed under “other key documents” are helpful but not required for a successful application.

- Community location
- Contact person
- Partnership profile (overview, key leadership and staff)
- Broadband project information
  - Project summary (overview, objectives, efforts to date, location)
  - Project challenges (including solutions pursued)
  - Project partners (roles and involvement)
  - Intention for seeking technical assistance
- Letters of support from local community partners or stakeholders (2–3 letters, scope of work or financial support)
- Other key documents (if available)
  - Assessments completed to date (e.g. community needs assessment, feasibility study, stakeholder engagement survey)
  - Asset inventory (map of community or network assets)
  - Currently awarded grant funding impacting target area (e.g., Rural Digital Opportunity Fund)
  - Community and stakeholder engagement plan
  - Business/financial model for construction and operations
  - Funding received to date (including restrictions)
  - Other relevant documents not listed

Questions?

Find our program information online: dallasfed.org/cd/digital

For questions on applying to the program, contact Kassandra Huhn ✉