Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas

Broadband Buildout Initiative
Information Session
July 10, 2024
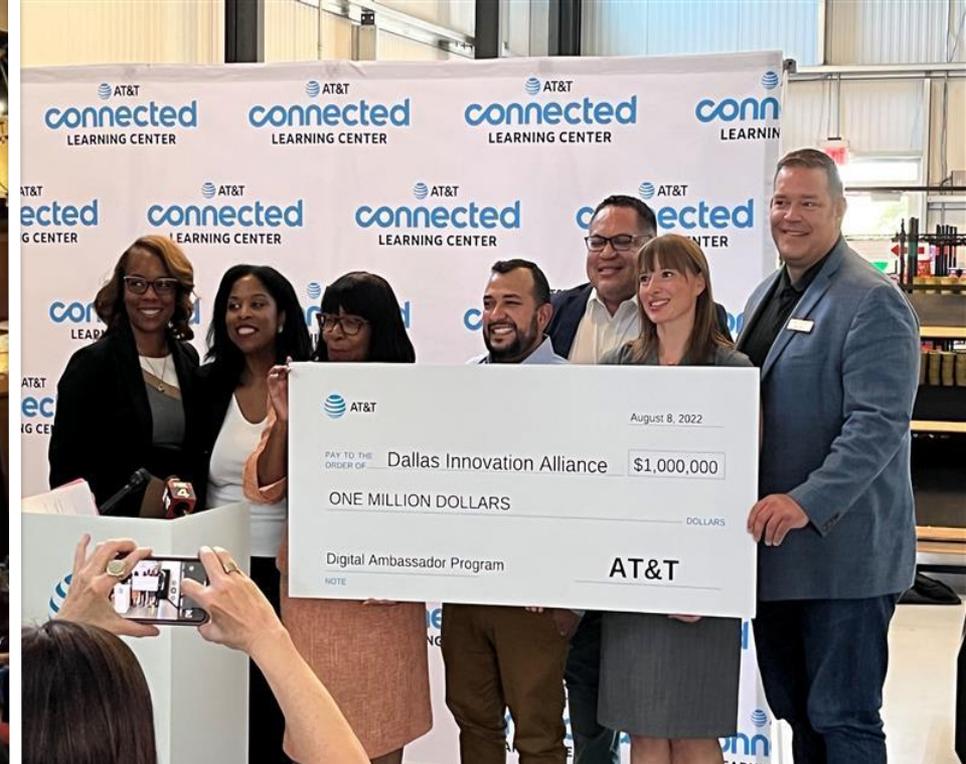
Welcome
Kseniya Benderskaya, Dallas Fed

Agenda

- Welcome
- Advancing Digital Inclusion
  - Round 2
  - Advisory Committee
  - Community Selection Process
- Overview of Broadband Buildout Initiative
  - Application Requirements
  - Selection Criteria
- Q&A
- Next Steps

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Advancing Digital Inclusion

Advancing Digital Inclusion: Round 2

Rural and urban communities face different obstacles in connecting all residents to affordable internet, devices, and digital skilling opportunities.

But both need a viable pipeline of investible deals and an understanding of/access to **different financing tools to fund projects**.

Through a two-track model, the Dallas Fed will help communities find innovative ways to finance digital inclusion projects.

Track 1:
Major Metros

Track 2:
Small/ Medium Sized Communities

Track 2: Broadband Buildout Initiative (BBI)

The BBI will provide technical support to four communities into 2025.

Goal:

Build infrastructure to unserved households

Technical Assistance Provider:

Connect Humanity

Support:
- Forge partnerships with mission-aligned internet service providers; and
- Develop a capital stack that brings together diverse sources of funding to bear the higher cost of financing network builds in less densely populated areas.

Dallas Fed Digital Inclusion Advisory Committee

The advisory committee provides expertise to inform the Dallas Fed's initiatives. They help ensure our programs align with the needs of local communities and are coordinated with related efforts in the region we serve.

Member	Organization	Organization Type
Diego Deleersnyder	Aspen Institute, Latinos & Society	Nonprofit, Policy Research
Revati Prasad	Benton Institute for Broadband and Society	Nonprofit, Policy Research
Rusty Moore	Big Bend Telecom	Internet Service Provider
Monica Gonzalez	Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas	Healthcare, Funder
JJ Childress	Microsoft (TechSpark)	Private Sector
Jennifer Case Nevarez	NM Office of Broadband Access and Expansion	Government, State
Cindy Fisher	Texas Broadband Development Office	Government, State
Kelty Garbee	Texas Rural Funders	Rural, Funder

BBI Selection Process

- Communities will be chosen by an independent selection committee.

- Members of this group are drawn from the Digital Inclusion Advisory Committee.

- The Fed **will not** participate in the selection committee deliberations and decision-making process.

- Selection committee members will be reviewed for potential conflicts of interest with applicants and any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved and managed prior to the selection process.

*The Dallas Fed does not fundraise or provide grants to program participants.

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Overview of BBI
Connect Humanity Team

Advancing Digital Inclusion

Connect Humanity

- **Non-profit impact investor**

- **Interdisciplinary team**

- **Community-centric**

Broadband Buildout Initiative

- "Last mile" support for deployment

- Technical expertise and advice

- Success = builds + connections - plans

Technical advice to get to deployment

Evaluating broadband technical plan

Developing economic implementation and business plan

Soliciting and structuring ISP partnerships

Supporting funding and financing strategies

Application

- Community info (geography)

- Primary contact

- Partnership profile (roles, responsibilities)

- Broadband project (summary of progress, challenges)

- Attachments (assessments, plans, studies, models, etc.)

Selection criteria

Selection Principles:

- Demonstrates characteristics of historically marginalized, persistent poverty, and/or economically distressed

- Material progress in broadband planning basics

- Likelihood TA will result in deployment

- App is minimal effort for communities

Preliminary Criteria:

- Applicant has clear champion and decision-maker

- Demonstrated planning progress and clear articulation of challenge(s)

- Demonstrated partnerships and CAIs

- Preliminary thoughts on funding

Evaluation

- Applicant profile – 20 points

- Project profile – 60 points

- Community support– 10 points

Q&As
Kassandra Huhn, Dallas Fed

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Early Questions

Q: What are the intended outcomes for selected communities?
A: Communities will deploy infrastructure to underserved households

Q: What community size is eligible to apply?
A: Small/ medium sized communities are welcome to apply. The selection committee will consider how many households your project will serve (<100,000)

Q: How long will the Dallas Fed support the selected communities?
A: Wrap up in 2025

Q: Do I need to have an ISP identified for my project?
A: No, but it would be helpful to know what ISPs in your community could be potential partners.

Early Questions

Q: Can I submit the application even if I don't have all the documents?
A: Yes! Note, the more documents you have, you'll likely receive more points during the selection process.

Q: What is the total budget for the grant?
A: This is not a cash grant; it is a technical assistance initiative.

Q: May a local government apply?
A: Yes.

Q: Must the applicant be an ISP?
A: No.

Q: Do I need to have a feasibility study completed?
A: Yes.

Early Questions

Q: Is my community a part of the Dallas Fed District? Am I eligible to apply?
A: All counties in Texas are eligible. Below are the counties and parishes covered by the Dallas Fed in New Mexico and Louisiana.

Southern New Mexico counties	
Catron	Lea
Chaves	Lincoln
Curry	Luna
De Baca	Otero
Dona Ana	Quay
Eddy	Roosevelt
Grant	Sierra
Guadalupe	Socorro
Hidalgo	Torrance

Northern Louisiana parishes	
Bienville	De Soto
Bossier	E. Carroll
Caddo	Franklin
Caldwell	Grant
Catahoula	Jackson
Claiborne	La Salle
Concordia	Lincoln
Madison	Tensas
Morehouse	Union
Natchitoches	Webster
Ouachita	W. Carroll
Red River	Winn
Richland	
Sabine	

Early Questions

Q: Are you looking for a county to apply or can my application be regional?
A: We welcome applications that cover single communities, counties, or are regional. We will only accept one application per area. Confirm with stakeholders in your region before you apply.

Q: I'm an ISP. How would you suggest we get involved in your current initiative?
A: First, check if the area you serve has a digital inclusion coalition/non-profit and consider partnering with them to apply. If you are not aware, reach out to the Dallas Fed team and we can connect about other potential opportunities.

Q: What can we expect after we submit our application?
A: The selection committee will score the applications and interview the communities. All communities will be notified whether they were selected by September. For updates, email Kassandra <Kassandra.Huhn@dal.frb.org>.

Next Steps
Marycruz De Leon, Dallas Fed

Timeline

June 24: Application released

July 10: Open forum information session

Week of July 15: Session recording on dallasfed.org

August 5: Responses Due

August/September: Selection Subcommittee application review, community interviews and deliberations

Late September: Communities notified

Early October: Program starts

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