



OFFICE OF STATEWIDE BROADBAND

Federal Application Assistance for Broadband Funding

Request for Proposals

Office of Statewide Broadband
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1. Executive Summary

In order to best use the limited resources at its disposal, the Office of Statewide Broadband (OSB) is looking to partner with applicants interested in solving the problem of delivering broadband to unserved rural residents and businesses (project) by applying for federal funding opportunities. While the OSB will assist with the project, the applicant will be the project owner and will be responsible for the overall funding and implementation of the project.

The OSB understands that geography and population distribution may require creative options for ubiquitous broadband deployment. As such, the OSB is technology neutral, any technology capable of meeting speed and latency requirements set forth in this document are permissible.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued as a means of information gathering. Evaluation of the responses to the RFP will guide the OSB in determining partnerships and funding allocations. With adequate future funding, additional assistance may be made available for additional projects. Response to this RFP does not confer an obligation to the OSB to establish a partnership with the responding applicant.

Participation in this RFP is voluntary and the OSB will not pay for the preparation of any information submitted by a respondent in response to the RFP or for the OSB's use of that information.

2. Assistance Program

The OSB will offer assistance in preparing and reviewing federal funding applications to ensure that applications are complete and competitive. The OSB will coordinate with other State Agencies on the use of State assets where they will feasibly benefit the project.

2.1. Timeframe

It is the OSB's intention to offer partnerships on a rolling basis depending on the federal funding opportunity and available state funding. Timing of partnership must allow sufficient time to prepare funding applications for the identified Federal funding program.

2.2. Funding Program

The OSB is proposing to assist applicants in developing competitive applications for Federal funding opportunities.

The OSB expects to reimburse for properly contracted services required for the application, such as:

- Engineering consultants
- Financial consultants
- Marketing studies
- Legal consultants

Other costs may also be considered on a case-by-case basis. Costs will only be considered for projects that submit a completed application for the federal funding program and that meet the terms and conditions of the federal funding program.

OSB will provide a maximum funding amount of \$125,000 to the applicant for these costs.

3. Project Area

Since this partnership opportunity is directed at funding provided via agencies of the federal government, the federal program requirements must be followed.

Federal broadband funding programs typically do not allow funding to be used in an area where there have been other federal investments. Federal broadband funding programs typically restrict funding to areas where broadband is not available based on the federal program's definition of broadband service. The federal program applicant is responsible for ensuring the proposed funded service area meets all federal program requirements. If the

federal program does not define an unserved area, an area without internet service at 25Mbps down and 3 Mbps up will be considered unserved by the OSB.

4. Network Requirements

Unless the federal funding program are more restrictive, the OSB will only support projects that are able to provide a minimum internet connectivity of 1000 Mbps down and 1000 Mbps up with a maximum latency of 50 milliseconds.

5. RFP Response Requirements

Responses to this RFP should explain how the respondent's approach will further the OSB's goal of ensuring that residents in unserved areas, as defined herein, are to be provided access to high speed internet. While there is no minimum or maximum length of the required response, please be concise and limit your response to the information requested.

The response should also include assistance or cooperation that the local jurisdiction will offer to the partner, if any.

5.1. Cover Letter

Please include the local jurisdiction name, authorized representative contact name, contact address, phone number and email address. Similar partner information must also be included.

5.2. Application Form

The application form attached to this document must be completed and signed by both the local jurisdiction and the ISP partner.

5.3. Business Model Summary

Please summarize the business model the owner of the network intends to use to provide service and manage any debt service. The business model should outline the network operations and customer operations you plan to utilize.

5.4. Experience

Please provide a statement of experience of the team that will participate in any application preparation as well as those that would be involved in the operation and delivery of service. Clearly identify whether the team member is a local jurisdictional employee or from a partnering ISP.

5.5. Network Design and Construction

Please provide a description of the network to be constructed and the method of construction. The description should provide the network speed and latency capabilities and backhaul method and requirements. The description should also discuss pole attached vs. underground for wired networks and tower type expectations for a wireless network.

5.6. Customer Profile

Please provide a description of the customer base you intend to serve and any existing competitive service in the area.

5.7. Schedule

Describe the proposed schedule for implementing the project. Provide a timeline with key milestones.

6. Response Process

Please submit one (1) electronic copy of your response to OSB.MD@maryland.gov with the name of the applicant and "Federal Funding Assistance RFP response" in the subject line.

Please identify any proprietary or confidential information contained in your response as such.

The OSB will do its utmost to timely answer questions related to this RFP. Questions should be provided in writing to the email address above.

- a. The OSB reserves the right to waive any formalities on the RFP process, to re-advertise the RFP, to amend the RFP, to extend the dates provided herein or to suspend the RFP as the OSB may determine, in its sole discretion, is in the best interest of the OSB.
- b. No reimbursement will be made by the OSB for any costs incurred in responding to this RFP, developing or submitting responses to the RFP, or attendance at meetings or interviews.
- c. The OSB reserves the absolute right to conduct such investigations as it deems necessary to assist in the evaluation of any response to the RFP and to establish the experience, responsibility, reliability, references, reputation, business ethics, history, qualifications and financial ability of the respondent(s), proposed partners, independent Consultants and suppliers. The purpose of such investigation is to satisfy the OSB that the respondent has the experience, resources and reputation necessary to perform the work.
- d. In the event RFP respondents are considered for a partnership with the OSB, the OSB reserves the right to partner with the local jurisdiction or its partner that demonstrates the

best ability to fulfill the requirements for the performing the subject services. A successful awardee will be chosen based on the qualifications, evaluation of submittals and a possible interview. The OSB reserves the right to conduct such discussions or negotiations it deems necessary to assist in the evaluation of any proposal, to secure maximum clarification and completeness of any proposal, and select the proposal that best meets the requirements of the OSB and the public interest.



Federal Funding Assistance for Broadband Funding Grant Application Form

(additional information required – see RFP for all application requirements)

Project Name: _____

Applicant Information

Legal Name (must match W9):

Federal EIN Number: _____

Attach a copy of your most current IRS W-9 Form

Address:

Street: _____

City: _____

County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Project Information

Technology used to serve the subscriber:

Check all that apply

Fiber Optics

Coax

Unlicensed Fixed Wireless Frequency Band: _____

Licensed Fixed Wireless Frequency Band: _____

Other: _____



Unserved Households and Businesses expected to be passed:

Households: _____

Businesses: _____

Other: _____

Applicant Contact Information

This should be the primary contact for the person coordinating all elements of this application for the Applicant. This is the person the Office will contact with any questions regarding the application.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____



APPLICANT

CERTIFICATION OF GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information provided in this Application is true and correct. I further certify that I have reviewed the Request for Proposals, Federal Application Assistance for Broadband Funding document.

Signed

Date

Typed Name

Title