**MISSOURI BROADBAND GRANT PROGRAM**
**APPLICATION SCORING AND AWARD PROCESS**

### Introduction to Scoring and Award Process

The Department of Economic Development (DED) will give priority to projects that provide the highest return in public benefits for the public costs incurred. To evaluate the applications for public benefits with respect to the costs incurred, the law specifies certain priorities that DED must consider.

To fulfill this requirement of reviewing applications in an objective and fair manner, applications will be reviewed and evaluated by DED using the following criteria and point values to systematically score and award grants. These criteria reflect information provided in the grant application. To ensure that an application receives the best possible score, it should include complete and comprehensive responses to all information requested.

**2020 Selection Criteria and Grant Scoring Categories**
**130 points possible**

**Anticipated Broadband Improvements:** *0 to 25 points possible*

**Anticipated Broadband Improvements Scoring Table**

| # of Connections | Speed Now*: | ≤10/1 unserved | ≤10/1 unserved | ≤10/1 unserved | ≤25/3 underserved | ≤25/3 underserved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Speed After Build:* | 25/3 | 100/20 | 1Gbps/ 30 Mbps** | 100/20 | 1Gbps/ 30 Mbps** |
| 0-50 | Points Awarded: | 10 | 15 | 20 | 6 | 10 |
| 51-499 | | 12 | 18 | 23 | 8 | 12 |
| 500+ | | 15 | 20 | 25 | 10 | 15 |

**\*The predominant speed within the proposed project area. Speeds are shown as download/upload times and reflect megabits per second (Mbps) except those marked with "Gbps," which reflect gigabits per second.**
**\*\*Speed modified to reflect technologies capable of a 1Gbps download, but with a lower upload threshold.**

Unserved or underserved total connections potentially served by project:
- Anticipated improvements in broadband speed offerings from pre-existing broadband service levels to proposed service levels – project must reach or exceed state speed goals (speed now vs. speed after).
- Number of total connections to be served:
    o Total connections include households, businesses, farms, and significant community institutions.
- Highest scores are awarded for largest broadband speed improvements in unserved areas.

**Grant Funding Request Amount:** *0 to 20 points possible*

**Grant Funding Request Amount Scoring Table**

| Percent of eligible project costs requested | Points |
|---|---|
| 30% or less | 20 |
| 31 to 35% | 16 |
| 36 to 40% | 14 |
| 41 to 45% | 12 |
| 46 to 50% | 10 |

Percent of state grant request compared to total eligible project costs:

- Applicant matching funds of more than 50% will result in a higher application score for this category.
- Any funding partner contributions are included in applicant matching funds for points.
- DED shall not award any grant to an otherwise eligible grant applicant where funding from the Connect America Fund has been awarded, where high-cost support from the federal Universal Service Fund has been received by rate of return carriers, or other federal funding where a matching-fund component was not required. DED also, under section 620.2456.2 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, shall not award any grant which, when combined with any federal, state, or local funds, constitutes more than 50% of total eligible project costs.

**Project Readiness:** *0 to 20 points possible*

Applicant has demonstrated the organizational capacity to initiate, construct, and launch the project:
- Applicant demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of the proposed project.
- Applicant provides evidence of being prepared to begin construction within 90-120 days following grant award, with complete project schedule provided.
- Applicant also demonstrates ability to implement and operate the project.
- All budget material is provided in a detailed, yet clearly understandable manner:
  - Sources and uses of funds are realistic,
  - Grant eligible activities are included, and
  - Funding for an applicant's match is secured and supporting documentation submitted.
- Applicant has submitted all required documentation requested in the addendum section of the application.
- Application includes other broadband infrastructure requirements – certified engineering design and diagrams, documentation of scalable equipment, and all preconstruction requirements are identified and included in the project schedule.
- Application includes project implementation details – proposed speed tiers, proposed marketing and early adoption strategies, and service pricing with a 3-year commitment, except that DED will consider waiving or modifying such pricing commitment requirement if an applicant can demonstrate either objective, internal pricing controls that will ensure a comparable consumer benefit, or other significant extenuating circumstances that make such a pricing commitment commercially insurmountable for an applicant.

**Project Sustainability:** *0 to 20 points possible*

Applicant has demonstrated strong internal capacity to effectively support and sustain its broadband infrastructure proposal:
- Demonstration of technical expertise – specific prior experience in providing broadband services.
- Organizational support evidence provided – how the organization will sustain broadband service delivery and maintenance.
- Financial statements provided – most current audited financial statements and the most recent quarter's financial statements, to demonstrate overall financial viability.

- Future scalability explained – how the organization will scale broadband service delivery beyond the scope of the proposed project.

## Community Participation: *0 to 15 points possible*

Applicant has demonstrated significant community participation to aid the overall project:
- Verified financial commitment to the project from any qualified community partner(s)
  - Community partner may be any public*, private, non-profit, or philanthropic entity – this would include a business, county, township, or municipality. Letters signifying partner support and financial commitment are required to be included in grant submission.
- Project applications that provide substantive evidence of community support for the project
  - Substantive evidence may include: letter of commitment from the appropriate unit of local government indicating key support for the project; survey results indicating the number of committed customer connections upon project completion; any other mechanism that shows commitment to subscribe from area businesses, households, farms, and other significant community institutions.

  ***Please note**, public partners financially committing to the project will be calculated as public sources. All government sources of funding (local, county, state, and federal) cannot exceed 50% of the total project.

## Economic Development & Community Impact Review: *0 to 15 points possible*

Applicant has demonstrated the economic development and community enhancement potential of the proposed project:
- Applicant has identified the number of households, businesses, farms, agricultural-use customers, other significant community institutions, and educational facilities in the proposed project area which may benefit from improved broadband service.
- For businesses, farms, and agricultural use customers, Applicant has identified how improved broadband speeds and coverage will enable the project area to become and/or remain competitively viable
- For significant community institutions, Applicant has identified how improved broadband deployment will be incorporated into specific community programs.
- For project service areas including educational institutions, Applicant has identified the proposed impact on e-learning (defined as learning utilizing technologies to access educational curriculum outside of the classroom).
- For a project including health entities, Applicant has identified the proposed impact on telemedicine.
- If the project service area is an economically distressed area, Applicant has demonstrated that the proposed project area has unemployment, individual poverty, or population decline greater than the statewide average.
- Additional county data including the project service area will also need to be included for benchmarking purposes: median household income, percentage of students eligible for free or reduced school lunches, percent of population over age 65, percentage of population age 25 or older without a high school degree, and noninstitutionalized civilians with a disability.

## Broadband Adoption Assistance: *0 to 15 points possible*

Applicant has demonstrated the necessary broadband adoption strategies will be in place to assist the success of the overall proposed project:
- Broadband adoption activities planned for the project.
- A plan to actively promote the adoption of newly available broadband service to the community.
- Provision of technical support or training on how to connect correctly to the new broadband service.
- Digital literacy or online security trainings or events.
- Whether a low-income broadband assistance program will be offered.