State Broadband Expansion Grants

FY2022
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Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
December, 2021

Today’s Agenda

• Program Overview
• Eligibility (who, where)
• Application Content, with Scoring Overview
• What’s New
• Budget and Income Summary
• Submitting Your Application
Broadband Expansion Grant Program

To encourage the deployment of advanced telecommunications capability in underserved areas of the state.

Gov. Evers Announces up to $100 Million Investment in Broadband Expansion Grants Access

- Application materials issued on December 1, 2021
- Applications due on March 17, 2022
- Funds for this grant round will come from bond proceeds authorized by the Wisconsin Building Commission
## Schedule of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 15, 2022, 4PM CT</td>
<td>Last day for submitting questions and requests for clarification</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 16, 2022, 4PM CT</td>
<td>Last day to request uploading assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 17, 2022, 4PM CT</td>
<td>Applications due from applicants (deadline for uploading to ERF). Applications are available to the public via ERF on March 18 under docket 5-BF-2022.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14, 2022, 4PM CT</td>
<td>Last day for submitting an objection to a grant application</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21, 2022, 4PM CT</td>
<td>Last day for submitting a response to an objection</td>
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</table>

## Eligibility
Who may Apply for a Broadband Grant?

Applicants must fall within one of the following three applicant categories:

1) An organization operated for profit or not-for-profit, including a cooperative.

2) A telecommunications utility.

3) A city, village, town, or county that has entered into a partnership with an eligible organization or telecommunications utility.

   • For purposes of eligibility for a Broadband Expansion Grant, an Indigenous Nation or Tribe located within the State will treated as an Organization under Item 1 above.

Where may Broadband Grants be awarded?

For an area to be considered eligible for a grant, it must be considered “underserved.”

• “Underserved” = Area served by fewer than 2 providers offering “Broadband Service”

• “Broadband Service” = 25 Mbps Download / 3 Mbps Upload

• “Unserved” area priority factor described in Application Contents & Scoring section
Grant Eligibility Updates

To offer the best guidance for grant applications and evaluations, the PSC will share updated eligibility guideline layers during the application period.

- Preliminary: Based on December 2020 coverage data. Available now.
- Final: Based on final review of newest coverage data. Anticipated January 2022.

“The Wisconsin Broadband Map is not accurate with respect to my location.”

As coverage data granularity still vary between the FCC’s census block standards and more precise coverage depictions, eligible locations are underrepresented.

The grant application instructions provide:

- If the project area lies within a census block designated as served on the PSC Broadband Map, provide additional documentation to demonstrate the actual broadband service that is available in the proposed project area.
We Need the Mapping Data of your Proposed Project!

A geospatial file of your proposed project must be emailed to the PSC by the application due date.

- Data may be submitted in various formats
- Must work as a vector file in GIS software
- Data will be used in mapping tools to evaluate the impact of proposed projects

Stay Tuned!
"How to Map your Broadband Grant Project" Webinar

Anticipated for January 2022

- Learn how to submit grant application mapping data
- Understand location-based grant eligibility
- Review grant mapping and planning resources, with Q & A
Mapping Resources

Watch for updated data and a “How to Map your Broadband Grant Project” webinar announcement on the Grant webpage

To view grant eligibility guideline layers and coverage updates: https://maps.psc.wi.gov/apps/WisconsinBroadbandMap/

To view other grant-related maps, visit: https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/Programs/BroadbandMaps.aspx

To download grant-related map layers, see: https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/Programs/BroadbandData.aspx

Application Contents & Scoring
Application Contents

- Page 1: Cover Sheet – must be signed
- Page 2 & 3: Summary of the Grant Application
- Page 4: Budget and Income Summary
- Page 5 plus: Project Map or Maps
- Remaining pages up to 30: Narrative
- Page 31 – 40: Attachments and supplemental materials that will be reviewed
- Page 40 – end: Additional supporting materials may not be reviewed

How Does the Commission Evaluate Grant Applications?

The record that the Commission considers to make its grant award decision consists of the following 5 items:

- Grant applications
- Comments of interested persons in support as part of the application
- Opposition to one or more specific applications
- Ranking of the grant applications prepared by a preliminary evaluation committee
- Discussion memo prepared by Commission staff

The Commission meets in an open session to discuss the record and to decide which applications should be awarded grants.
What Specific Items of Information Must be Discussed in the Grant Application?

The statute that authorizes the Broadband Grant Program requires that the Commission give priority to applications that include any of seven factors listed in the statute:

- Matching funds (10 pts.)
- Unserved Area (15 pts.)
- Scalability (5 pts.)
- Will not delay broadband service in adjacent areas (5 pts.)
- Public/private partnerships (10 pts.)
- Project impact (15 pts.)
- Economic impact (10 pts.)

To date, the Broadband Grant program has been quite competitive. The Commission has received many more applications than it can fund. The discussion of priority factors has been the key element of the application that the Commission has used to decide which applications to fund.

Priority

Following the evaluation for eligibility for funding, applications will also be reviewed by the evaluation committee and ranked based on the priority items listed in Wis. Stat. § 196.504.

- **Match (10 points):** An application will receive credit based on the percentage of matching funds the applicant proposes to invest in its project and the variety of sources of matching funding provided by others.

- **Public-Private Partnership (10 points):** An application proposing to build a broadband facility in partnership with a city, village, town, or county government will receive priority credit.
Priority Continued

• **Unserved Areas (15 points):** An application proposing to build or extend broadband service to an area with existing service less than 5 Mbps down and 500 Kbps up shall receive priority credit.

• **Project Impact (15 points):** An application that proposes to serve a comparatively larger geographic area, a larger number of customers or communities in an area, or provide a higher level of performance or service quality, shall receive priority credit.

• **Scalability (5 points):** An application that demonstrates a commitment to increase the size or scope of its broadband network in the future shall receive priority credit.

Priority Continued

• **Economic Development (10 points):** An application that demonstrates the potential to promote job growth or retention, expand the property tax base or improve the overall economic vitality of the municipality or region shall receive priority credit.

• **Effect upon Broadband Service to Adjacent Areas (5 points):** An application that demonstrates that it will not impair the ability of a competing broadband service provider to extend broadband service to areas adjacent to the proposed project area shall receive priority credit.
What’s New?

Funded by Bonding

- **Wisc. Statute 13.48(30)**
  
  (c) The building commission may authorize up to $125,000,000 in general fund supported borrowing. The amount is for use under s. 196.504(2)(a).

  (d) If the building commission authorizes borrowing under par. (c), and if, for any reason, a grant funded from the proceeds of such borrowing is not used for the construction of broadband infrastructure, as specified in par. (b), the state shall retain an ownership interest in the project funded from the grant equal to the amount of those proceeds.
Funded by Bonding – continued

• These bond proceeds will be subject to Wis. Stat. 13.48(30), and the public debt provisions of the Wisconsin Constitution (Article VIII, Sections 4 and 7(2)(a1)).

• The Commission is working with the Department of Administration to provide additional information related to the bond proceeds and its requirements.

• If the Commission determines that a recipient is not in compliance with Wis. Stat 13.48(30), the Commission will provide notice and the recipient will have a period to cure the violation.

• A draft grant agreement with the new terms and conditions, including related to bond proceeds, will be available in January.

Middle Mile Projects

• Middle mile projects have always been eligible for a state Broadband Expansion Grant. The PSC has funded several middle mile projects in the past.

• The FY2022 Application has new questions for middle mile project to specifically address in the application. The Commission would like additional information related to future last mile connections, use of the fiber resources and capacity.

• Middle mile projects that have the purpose and effect of creating improved, cost-efficient access to unserved areas are of interest to the Commission in this grant round.
Geospatial Files are Required by Due date

- A static map and description of the area of the State that will be affected by the project must be on page 5 of the application filed on ERF.

- A geospatial file depicting the area affected by the proposed project must be submitted in addition to the static map by the grant due date.
  - These files must be emailed to PSCBroadbandData@wisconsin.gov by the application due date.
  - Emails can deliver geospatial files using one of the following methods:
    - Email attachment
    - URL reference to a spatial file download

- A map of the geospatial files of the proposed projects will be available for review on our website before the end of the opposition period.

Application Budget and Income Summary
Summary of Grant Application

The Grant Manager receives grant fund payments!

Budget and Income Summary

- Template at [https://psc.wi.gov](https://psc.wi.gov) > Programs > Wisconsin Broadband Office > Broadband Grants > FY22 State Budget and Income Summary Form
- Predetermined budget line categories
- Include as page 4 of application AND submit Excel version

Application narrative should explain land & building purchases, and include price estimations for equipment purchases
**Budget Categories**

- Contractual, Consultant Fees
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Labor (Salary, Fringe)
- Permitting, Licensing Fees
- Travel
- Other

*Use the 5-BF-2022 State Budget Categories Reference Document*

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**Categories Defined**

- **CONTRACTUAL, CONSULTANT FEES**
  
  All project expenses for work performed by a third-party contractor. A third-party contractor is any entity that is not a signatory to the grant agreement or is not an ISP/Telco. Examples: legal services, cement contractors, tree trimmers, electrician and engineering services.
  
  Any materials supplied by a third-party contractor should be included here.
Categories Defined

• **EQUIMENT**
  Items with an acquisition cost greater than $5,000. This includes the cost of the asset as well as costs to ready the asset for its intended use. The equipment must have a useful life of more than one year. Expenses furnished by a third-party contractor, including materials furnished by the contractor, should never be included in this category.

• **SUPPLIES**
  Items with an acquisition cost of $5,000 or less or a useful life expectancy of less than one year. Supplies are generally consumed during the project performance period.

Categories Defined

• **LABOR (SALARY, FRINGE)**
  Labor expenses, including fringe benefits, of the grant manager and any ISP/Telco, even if the ISP/Telco is not the owner of the infrastructure. Fringe factors and other direct labor costs that are attributable to the project are allowable.

• **PERMITTING, LICENSING FEES**
  All permitting & licensing expenses.
Categories Defined

• **TRAVEL**
  Grantee's travel expenses related to the project, including travel expenses of an ISP/Telco regardless of whether the ISP/Telco is or isn't the owner of the infrastructure.

• **OTHER**
  Expenses associated with integrating affordability options into program design. Expenses associated with increasing internet access or digital literacy to households that experienced a negative economic impact from the pandemic, regardless of whether the above categories might also describe such expenses.

Ineligible Expenses

• Incurred before the date of written Commission Order or after the Performance Period specified in the Grant Agreement (see section 1.8 of application)
• Incurred by applicant in preparing this application (section 2.2)
• Unspecified equipment and capital expenditures [section 3.2.3(a)]
• Expenses that subsidize the expenses of a telecommunications provider or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers [section 3.2.3(b)].
## FY22 Broadband Expansion Grant Application

**Budget & Income Summary**

Please complete this form using Microsoft Excel. A PDF copy must be attached to your application as page four. In addition, this form must also be uploaded to RRP in Excel format.

### Grant Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Applicant</th>
<th>Project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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### Budget

<table>
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<th>Line</th>
<th>Description / Category</th>
<th>Grant Funds</th>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>$</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Equipment</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Supplies</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Labor (Salary, Fringe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Permitting, Licensing Fees</td>
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<td>Totals</td>
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### Pledged Contributions

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<th>Entity</th>
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<th>Pledge Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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**Total:** $ -
Numbers MUST Agree!

FY22 Broadband Expansion Grant Application
Budget & Income Summary

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<tr>
<td>5. Permits, Licensing fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Travel</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pledged Contributions

| # | Entity | Entity Type | Pledge Type | Pledge |

SUMMARY OF GRANT APPLICATION:

- Primary Applicant Name:
- Federal Employer Identification No.:
- Contact Name and Title:
- Project Name:
- Total Cost of Proposed Project:

Submitting Your Application
Electronic Records Filing System (ERF)

- Save documents to be uploaded to your desktop
  - Path and filename cannot exceed 255 characters
  - 20MB limit per file; 10 files per upload
  - Upload your PDF’d application plus your spreadsheet
  - But email your map files instead of uploading to ERF

- Upload, go to [https://PSC.wi.gov](https://PSC.wi.gov) > E-Services > ERF Upload Documents
  - First time filers must establish a user account – Individual is recommended
  - Returning users can retrieve Username and Password
  - Must always log on to upload

More ERF Tips

- Refer to Section 2.0 of the Application for details
  - Existing Docket 5-BF-2022
  - Document Type is Application (for all – PDF and spreadsheet)
  - Description & File Name
    - BB App [insert name], [insert project]
    - [BB App Fast Internet Co Town of Colterville](https://PSC.wi.gov)
  - Spatial File Name: Fast Internet Co Town of Colterville
  - Identify parts (numerical or alphabetic sequencing) at end of description
More ERF Tips

• Deadline for uploading assistance is 4pm, Wednesday, March 16
  • Contact is alyssa.kenney@wisconsin.gov

• Deadline to upload applications and email spatial files is 4pm, Thursday, March 17

• Documents are date/time-stamped upon upload in ERF

Do NOT wait until the last minute to ERF!
Questions, Contacts, Docket, Maps & Other Important Dates

• In the case of ambiguity, error, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other deficiency in the Application, contact alyssa.kenney@Wisconsin.gov
  • Deadline is 4pm February 15, 2022

• For general questions, contact PSCStatebroadbandoffice@wisconsin.gov

• For all spatial file mapping questions (and submitting mapping files), contact PSCBroadbandData@Wisconsin.gov

• This Broadband Expansion Grant round will use the docket 5-BF-2022
  • Use the ERF – EZ Subscription https://apps.psc.wi.gov/ERF/ERF/ERFhome.aspx

Summary

• Make sure your application is eligible
  • Not currently served by 2 wireless or wireline connection that reliably delivers at least 25 Mbps download speed and 3 Mbps of upload speed

• Address the priority factors

• Follow the instructions, answer the questions completely

• Tell your story

• Curate the comments

• Data and people matter

• ERF Remember to log on & don’t wait until the last minute to familiarize and upload

• Email your geospatial file by the due date March 17, 2022