



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Rebecca Cameron Valcq, Chairperson
Ellen Nowak, Commissioner
Tyler Huebner, Commissioner

4822 Madison Yards Way
P.O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-7854

December 1, 2021

To: Persons Interested in the Broadband Expansion Grant Program

Re: FY 2022 Broadband Expansion Grants

5-BF-2022

Announcement of the Commencement of the FY 2022 Broadband Expansion Grant Cycle

The Public Service Commission is pleased to announce that it is now accepting applications for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Broadband Expansion Grants. This round will make available \$100 million for grants. There are a few notable differences from the prior Broadband Expansion Grant cycles. Applicants should review the changes in process and other information highlighted below and in the Application Instructions.

1. Schedule of Events

The schedule of events related to this year's grant application is as follows:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
December 1, 2021	Date of issue of the application instructions
February 15, 2022	Last day for submitting questions and requests for clarification
March 17, 2022 at 4:00PM CT	Applications due from applicants
April 14, 2022	Last day for submitting an objection to a grant application
April 21, 2022	Last day for submitting a response to an objection

2. The Commission strictly enforces the filing deadline for submitting applications. Applicants are encouraged to file in advance of the deadline.
3. This grant round will award funds appropriated by the state legislation. Therefore, the eligibility rules in the applicable state statute will apply (Wis. Stat. §§ 13.48(30) and 196.504). These rules are slightly different than the eligibility rules used for the previous federally funded (ARPA) grant round. The Application Instructions provide a summary of the state eligibility requirements for this broadband grant round. A map indicating the

eligible areas for a state broadband grant is available on the PSC website at Programs>Wisconsin Broadband Office>Broadband Expansion Grants.

4. This grant round will be funded with bond proceeds authorized by the Wisconsin Building Commission pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). As such, successful applicants are subject to the requirements of Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). When the Building Commission authorizes borrowing under Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30)(c), and if, for any reason, a grant funded from the proceeds of such borrowing is not used for the construction of the approved broadband infrastructure project, as specified in Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30)(b), the State shall retain an ownership interest in the project funded from the grant equal to the amount of those proceeds. A list of new or different grant agreement requirements will be posted to the Broadband Expansion Grants web page in December, followed by a sample grant agreement, at Programs>Wisconsin Broadband Office>Broadband Expansion Grants.
5. With the FY 2022 cycle, the application instructions require a URL reference to a spatial file (Geodatabase / Feature Class, or Shapefile or KML) showing the proposed service area. The geospatial file of the proposed project must be emailed to pscbroadbanddata@wisconsin.gov by the application deadline.
6. The time period for filing objections to one or more grant applications has been extended to four weeks. Staff will use the additional week to assemble a map of proposed project areas, using the spatial data provided by applicants.
7. The Commission requests that applicants use the standard project naming format provided in the instructions: **BB App [insert organization name], [insert project name]**. Applicants should use this naming format when uploading the application document to ERF. Applicants should also use this naming format as the subject line of any e-mail message regarding a submitted application.
8. A revised Broadband Coverage Map will be released by the end of January and can be found on the PSC website at Programs>Wisconsin Broadband Office>Broadband Expansion Grants. The Commission will use the updated information to evaluate the grant applications in this round. An objection to a grant application that is based upon the Broadband Coverage Map data should use the updated map information.

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Questions or concerns about the grant application process, program administration, content of the application, or the meaning of any provision of the grant application instructions should be submitted by e-mail message to the State Broadband Office at PSCStateBroadbandOffice@wisconsin.gov, as provided in the Application Instructions. If the Commission finds that the instructions are unclear or in error, it will provide a clarification via the mailing list for this docket.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristy Nieto". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kristy Nieto
Division Administrator
Division of Digital Access, Consumer and Environmental Affairs

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