# BEAD Grant Award Management Platform
# User Guide: Benefit of the Bargain Round

Wisconsin BEAD BOB Grant Award Management | SaaS platform

**Developed for:**

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW)

**Authored by:**

CostQuest Associates, LLC

**Publication date:**

July 15, 2025

**Revision date:**


Document Version: V1.0

## Contents

# Document Version History

This guide continues to evolve based on user feedback and program updates. Each update reflects our commitment to providing clear, comprehensive guidance for all platform users.

| Version | Date | Changes |
|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | July 15, 2025 | BEAD BOB Round User Guide Initial release |

# 1. Introduction

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Grant Award Management Platform is the required platform that all approved organizations must use to create and submit BEAD project proposals. This comprehensive guide serves as a primary resource for navigating the platform effectively.

## Purpose

This guide accommodates different learning and reference styles, providing multiple ways to access and understand the information needed. The content is structured in layers, allowing you to quickly find basic information while having easy access to more detailed explanations when needed.

## Reasonable accommodations

The Commission will provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. If you need accommodations, contact Alyssa Kenney at (608) 267-9138 or Alyssa.Kenney@wisconsin.gov.

## Scope

This guide covers:

- Application creation and submission processes;
- User access and management;
- Platform navigation and functionalities;
- Reporting; and,
- Support access.

For new users, we recommend starting with the Getting Started section and progressing sequentially through the guide. Experienced users can use the quick navigation features to jump directly to specific topics of interest.

# 2. Getting Started

**☐ Quick Start: System Setup**

- Complete prerequisites
- Verify system requirements
- Whitelist platform domain
- Set up a user account

The path to full platform access involves several coordinated steps. Understanding this sequence helps ensure you complete all requirements efficiently and avoid common delays. We recommend following this process in order, as each step builds upon the previous ones.

## 2.1 Prerequisites

Starting your journey with the BEAD Grant Award Management Platform requires careful preparation and attention to several key prerequisites to ensure a smooth onboarding process and seamless platform utilization.

### Approved Letter of Intent (LOI)

- Access to the BEAD Grant Award Management platform requires approval by the Commission of the Letter of Intent filed by the organization.
- For questions about the LOI process, contact the PSCW BEAD team at PSCBEADGrants@Wisconsin.gov

### Valid Access Credentials

- After LOI approval notification, PSCW will provide CostQuest with the name and email of the Administrative User approved by PSCW. The Administrative User will receive access instructions via email.
- If you are the Administrative User and have not received an email, check your spam email folder, then contact wibeadsupport@costquest.com if you require additional support.
- Users that previously had access to the WI BEAD Grant Management platform will retain that access (will not receive another invitation).

## 2.2 System Requirements

The BEAD Grant Award Management Platform is a SaaS system designed to run smoothly on modern computers with up-to-date web browsers. While the platform may work on other configurations, we recommend the following setup for the best experience:

- **Hardware:** Desktop or laptop with sufficient processing power to run modern web applications smoothly.
- **Operating System:** Windows (latest versions) with all security patches and updates installed.
- **Browsers:** Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge (latest versions).
- **Additional Requirements:**
    - Internet access is restricted to approved regions (U.S., Canada, Germany, and Great Britain). Users attempting to access the platform from outside these regions will encounter difficulties.
    - Ensure "wi.grantaward.io" is whitelisted in your organization's IT system if domain filtering is used.

## 2.3 Account Management

The platform supports two types of users with distinct permissions and capabilities.

### Administrative Users

Serve as the primary account holders for their organizations. Each organization is limited to one administrative user. They can:

- Manage user access for their organization
- Access all platform features, including creating, editing, and viewing applications
- Perform critical actions such as application approvals and submissions

### Standard Users

Handle day-to-day application work. Organizations can have up to four standard users assigned by the Administrative User, who can:

- Create, edit, and view applications
- Save draft applications

- Validate and request application approvals
- Upload files for use on all applications

> ⚠️ **Important**
> - Only Administrative Users can activate/deactivate standard user access
> - Only Administrative Users can submit applications for official consideration
> - A change in Administrative User must be approved by PSCW

## 2.4 Access and Authentication

Each organization's assigned Administrative User will get an email invitation from wibeadsupport@costquest.com to access the BEAD Grant Management platform. Following this, they will complete a simple setup process. Here is what to expect:

The administrative user must be the authorized organization representative as listed in the letter of intent who has authority to bind the company legally and financially.

### Initial Setup

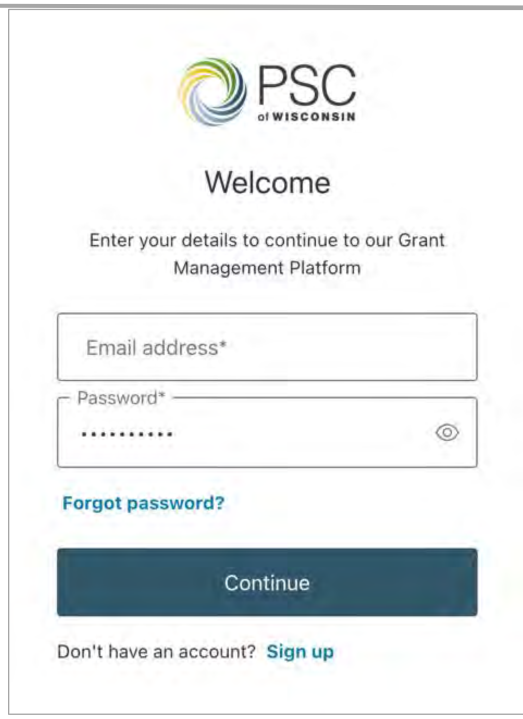
1. Click the "Set Your Password" secure setup link provided in the email.
2. Create a secure password following the platform's requirements (e.g., eight characters minimum, a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, and at least one number or special character).
3. Log in to the platform and accept the End User License Agreement (EULA).

### To reset your password

1. Click "Forgot Password" on the login screen.
2. Enter your registered email address.
3. Follow the instructions sent to your email to create a new password.

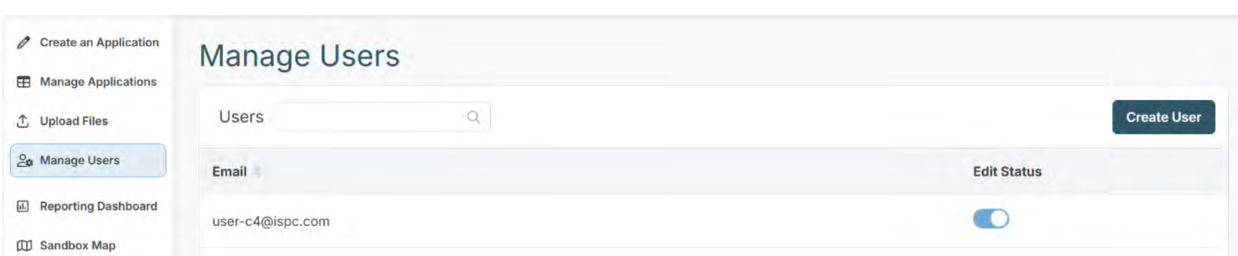
### How to Access the System

1. Open your web browser and navigate to https://wi.grantaward.io.
2. Enter your registered email address and password.




## User Account Setup

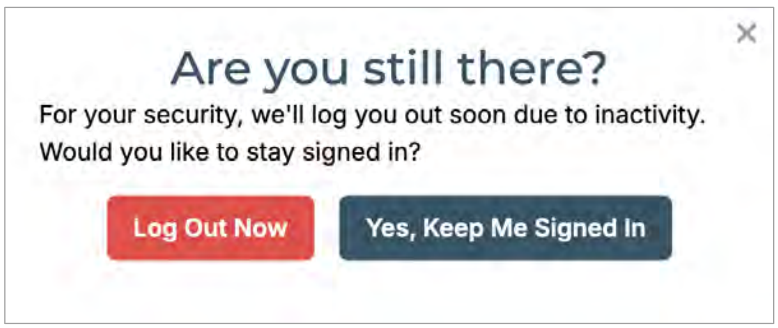
1. Administrative Users can log in and navigate to the "Manage Users" section. Only Administrative Users have access to this section.
2. Select "Create User" and enter the new user’s name and email address.
3. The new user will receive an email with instructions to set up their account as well as an email to set up their Zendesk account for the WI Grant Award Management platform support desk.
4. The Edit Status indicator for each active user will be blue (toggled on) in the system dashboard.



The Administrative User can deactivate a standard user by simply toggling the edit status button on the Manage Users page.

### Session Management

To protect sensitive information, the platform includes automatic timeout features. Administrative users receive a warning after 5 minutes of inactivity, while standard users get a warning after 20 minutes. When the timeout warning appears, the user can choose to continue the session or log out immediately.




If the user does not respond, the system will logout the user after two (2) additional minutes. This helps ensure security while preventing the loss of unsaved work.

## 3. Application Process

**❑ Quick Reference: Application Steps**

- Create new application
- Select project units
- Specify funding and contributions
- Upload documentation
- Submit for review

The application process is a core interaction between grant seekers and the BEAD program, guiding you through each application stage. We encourage applicants to review all requirements thoroughly and develop their narratives alongside supporting documentation.

## 3.1 Creating Application

Click the "**Create an Application**" button on your dashboard. Start by providing fundamental information about your project.

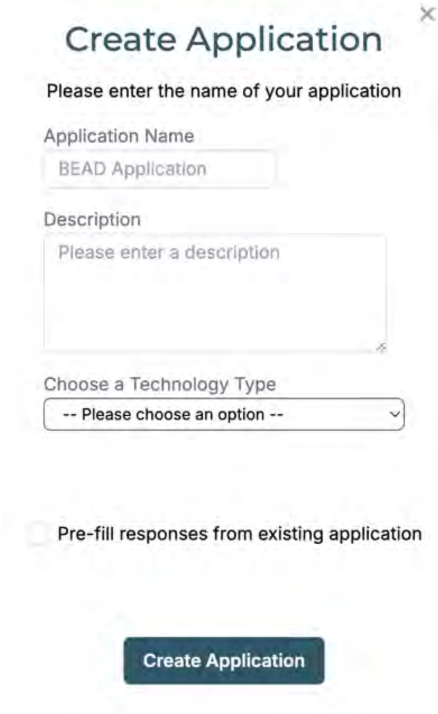
The platform will prompt you to:

1. Enter a unique Application Name (50 characters or less)
2. Write a Project Description (250 characters or less)
3. Choose a Technology Type from the dropdown
4. If applicable, select to pre-fill responses from an existing application in the dropdown
5. Click on "Create Application" to generate an application ID

Choose clear, descriptive names that help you identify your applications easily. For example, "Northern Wisconsin Fiber Deployment 2025" is more helpful than "Project 1." The application name will be the primary identifier for the application through the process.

⚠️ **Important**

- Once added, application names cannot be changed
- For auditing purposes, applications cannot be deleted – once created, applications remain in the platform.




## Technology Selection

Select your technology option from the dropdown.

| Option | Description | Code |
|---|---|---|
| **End-to-End Fiber Optic** | Fixed wireline service using end-to-end fiber-optic cable to the premise (FTTP) for all locations | 50 |
| **Cable Modem/Hybrid fiber-coaxial** | Fixed wireline service using coaxial cable or hybrid fiber-coaxial (e.g., DOCSISx) | 40 |
| **Terrestrial fixed wireless: licensed spectrum only** | Fixed terrestrial wireless service using entirely licensed spectrum or a hybrid of licensed, unlicensed, and licensed-by-rule spectrum to make last-mile connections to fixed locations. | 71 |
| **Terrestrial fixed wireless: hybrid licensed/unlicensed spectrum** | Fixed terrestrial wireless services using entirely licensed-by-rule spectrum or a hybrid of licensed-by-rule and unlicensed spectrum to make last-mile connections to fixed locations. | 72 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Terrestrial fixed wireless: unlicensed spectrum** | Fixed terrestrial wireless service using entirely unlicensed spectrum | 70 |
| **Low Earth Orbit Satellite** | Fixed non-terrestrial wireless service using satellites in non-geostationary orbit | 61 |
| **Mixed Technology** | Projects using a combination of technologies | 0 |

** When selecting mixed technology, you will need to specify the distribution of Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) across different technologies.*

### Pre-fill Option

There is an option to pre-fill responses from an existing application. The only inputs that will not be included are the project units of the existing application. Since the technology choice is tightly interwoven with the application questions, any pre-filled application selection will determine the technology type for that application.

**Pro Tip:** Use the pre-fill option to create templates and reduce the amount of effort required to complete each application.

Once an application is created, there are seven sections that must be completed:

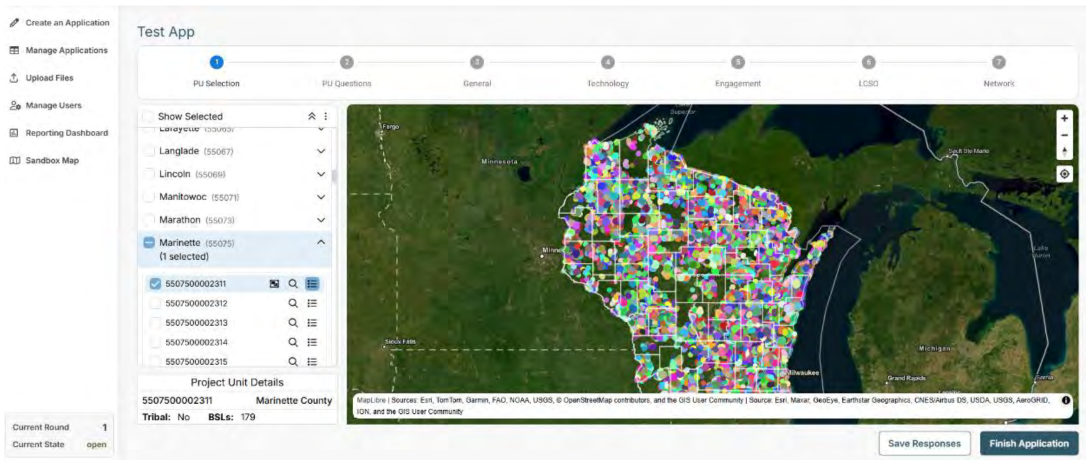
- Project Unit Selection
- Project Unit Questions
- General
- Technology
- Engagement
- LCSO
- Network

The specific content of each section depends on the choice of technology and the responses to various questions.

## 3.2 Project Unit (PU) Selection

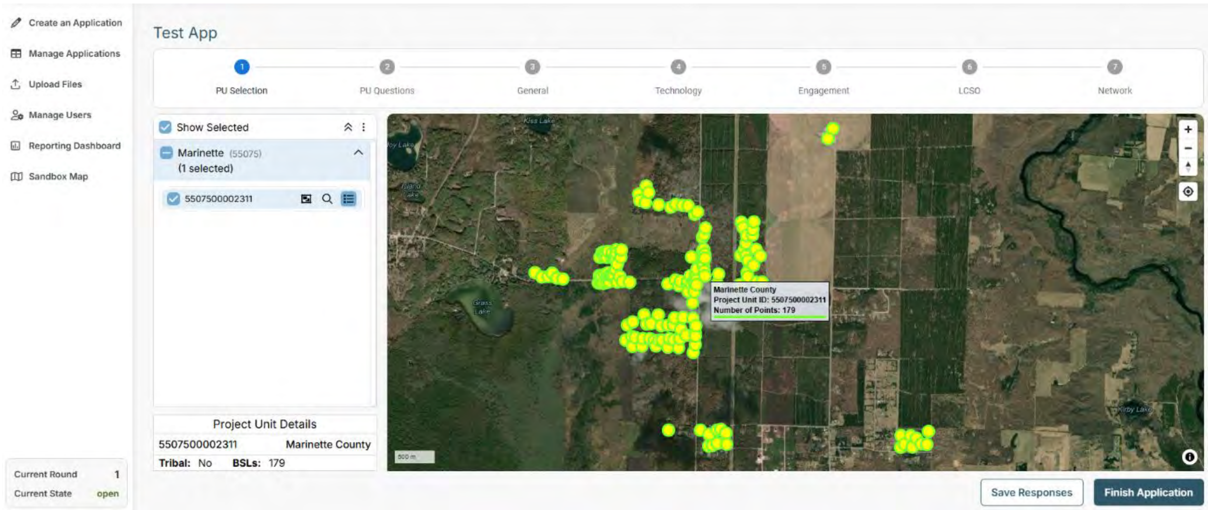
Project units are organized based on the county in which they reside. The platform supports complying with program regulations by validating that:

- Projects are within no more than four counties.
- Selected counties share at least one border.
- Project units appear on no more than two submitted/pending applications.

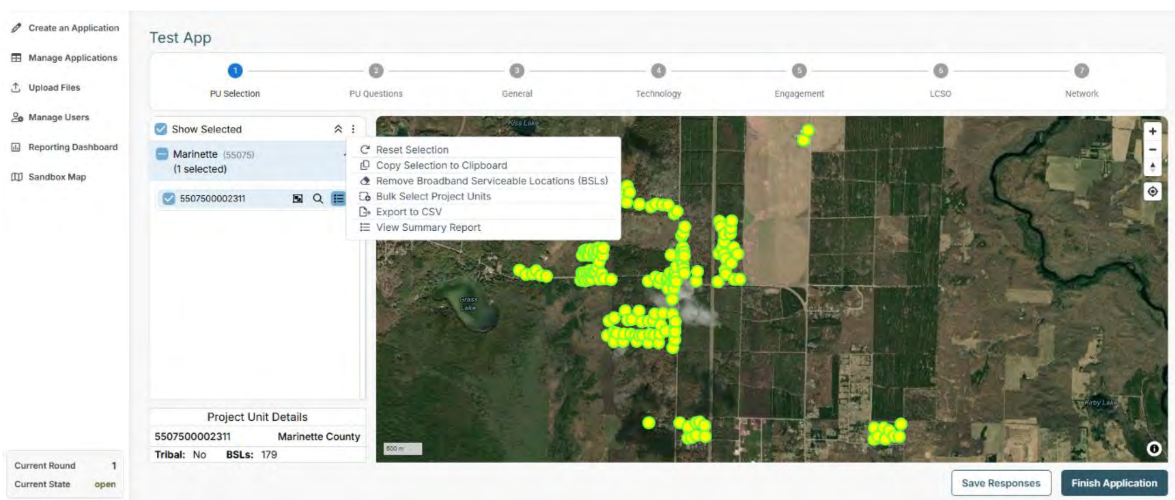



There are several methods for selecting project units in the Project Unit selection section.

- Choose from the list of counties based on the location of the project unit ID (e.g., 5506300001874 from La Crosse County). Clicking the expansion menu to the right of each county reveals all the project unit IDs within that county.
- Click on the map. When hovering over a project unit, the map displays the county, project unit ID, and the number of BSLs in the project unit, not incorporating any applicant-excluded BSLs. Clicking on the project unit selects it in the list on the left.




- Click on the ellipsis (three vertical dots) next to “Show Selected” to bulk select. Enter a list of project unit IDs, separated by commas in the box. Once “Add Selections” is clicked, those project units will be shown as selected in the list.

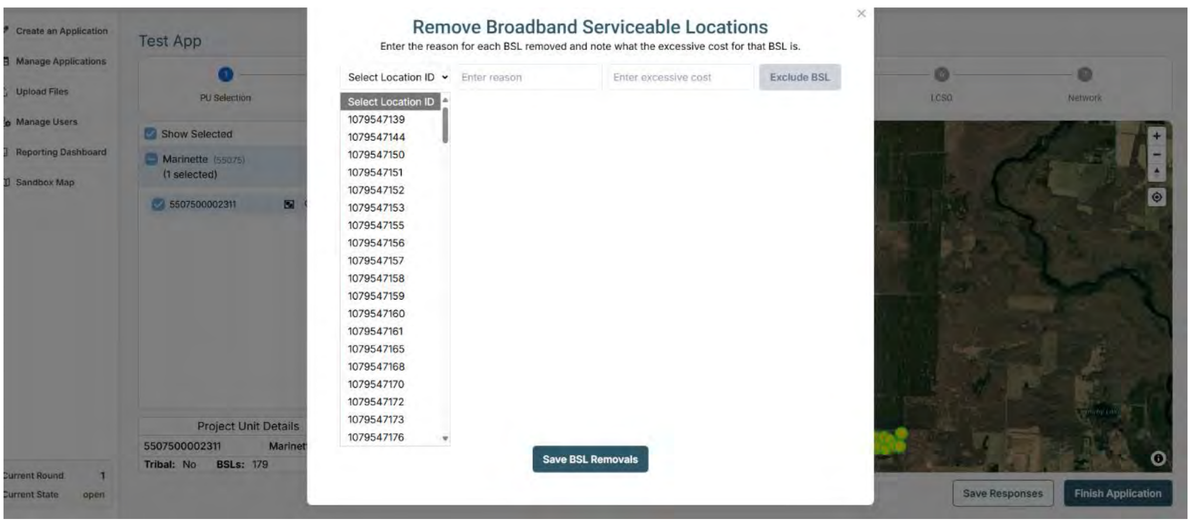



- Excluding BSLs from selected project units
  - BSLs can only be removed from separable project units.
    - If a project unit is marked as non-separable, the platform will not show any BSLs available to be removed.

  - If a user selects a project unit, removes BSLs when the project unit is separable, then later changes the project unit to non-separable, any previously excluded BSLs will be added back. No warning will show in the platform when this occurs.

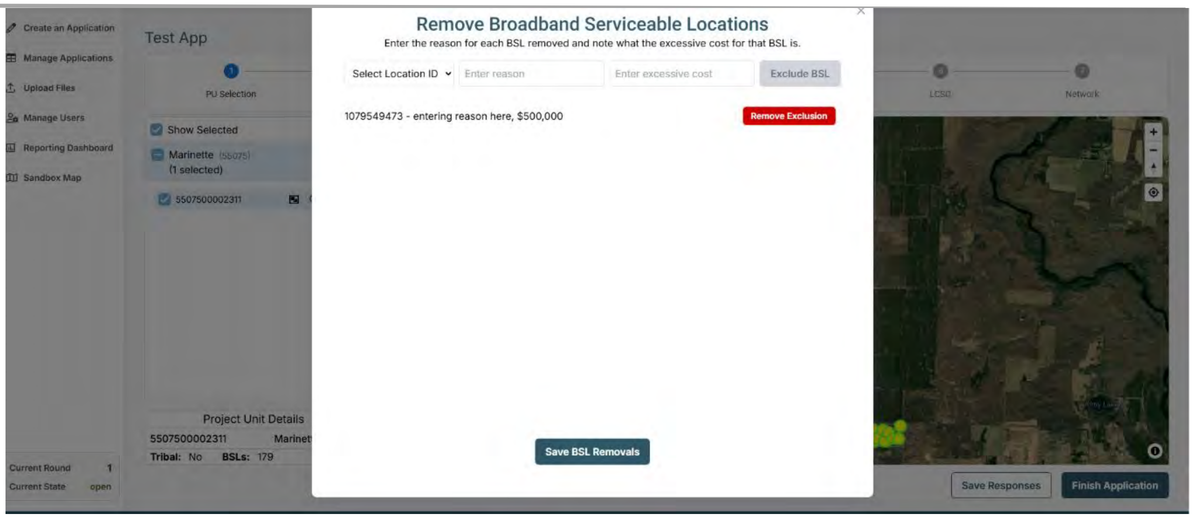
- Click on the ellipsis (three vertical dots) next to “Show Selected” to “Remove Broadband Serviceable Locations” from the selected project units.

- The location_id in the project units selected will appear in the Select Location ID dropdown. To exclude a BSL, the applicant must select a location_id from the dropdown, enter a reason for requesting its removal as well as the excessive cost. The applicant then selects “Exclude BSL” to add that BSL to the list. The applicant must select each location_id individually, respond to the questions and select “Exclude BSL.”




- If the user mistakenly adds a location_id to the list, it can be removed by selecting “Remove Exclusion” next to the location_id that should be added back to the applicant’s proposed project.

- Once all the BSLs to be excluded have been identified, the user selects “Save BSL Removals” to save the exclusion list to the application.




## Advanced Tools

Several tools and options can streamline the application process, regardless of how project units are selected.

- Using “Show Selected” will limit the project unit ID list and the project units displayed on the map to only those selected. This can make it easier to visualize the map and determine if adjacency and the four-county limit are met.
- To the right of each project unit ID in the list, there are three icons.
  - Choosing the little rectangle will set that project unit to separable or non-separable.
  - Clicking the magnifying glass will zoom to that project unit, highlighting it on the map.
  - Selecting the details icon will open the Project Unit Details below the list, showing the details of individual project units.
- View Summary Report, selected from the ellipsis next to Show Selected, will create a pop-up window displaying a few details of the selected project units. This is important for tracking the number of BSLs which incorporates any excluded BSLs. The summary also provides the number of tribal project units selected.

### Summary Report

**Total Project Units:** 9

**Tribal Project Units:** 0 **BSLs:** 1147

| ID | Tribal | BSL Tot. | County |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5500100000002 | No | 1 | Adams |
| 5500100000009 | No | 10 | Adams |
| 5500100000006 | No | 755 | Adams |
| 5500100000001 | No | 15 | Adams |
| 5500100000019 | No | 7 | Adams |
| 5500100000005 | No | 2 | Adams |
| 5500100000010 | No | 225 | Adams |
| 5500100000008 | No | 128 | Adams |
| 5500100000017 | No | 4 | Adams |

The details for each project unit are displayed underneath the Summary Report.

#### Important Validation Rules:

- The platform checks county adjacency and county limit of four
- Monitors total unique BSL quantities against LOI limits
- Limit of using same project unit on no more than two (2) applications

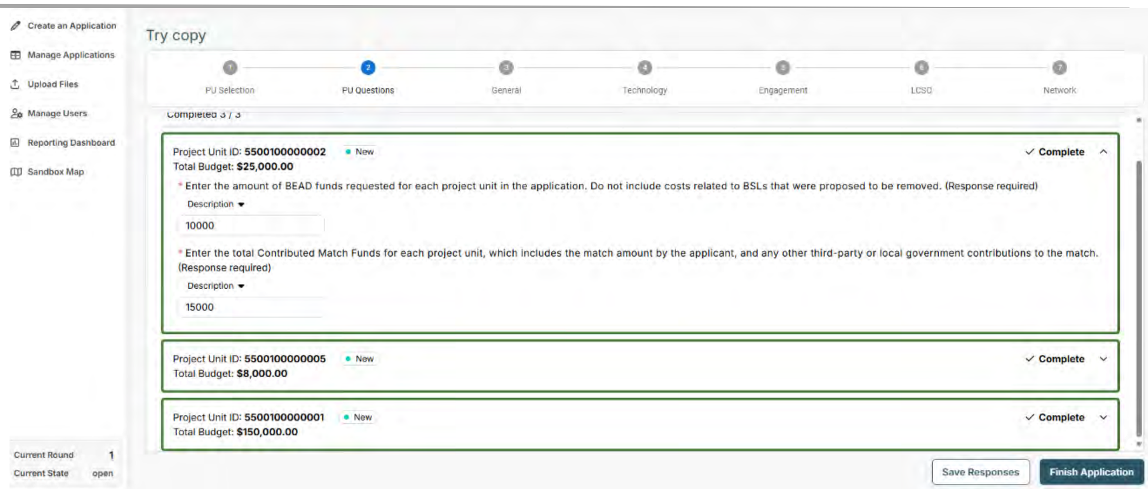
These validations occur later in the process rather than at the time of selecting the project units in the PU Selection section.

## 3.3 Project Unit (PU) Questions

For each project unit selected in the project unit selection section, the following questions will be presented. Many questions will have a "Description" that can be expanded to provide more context about the response, and when it is required.

### Enter BEAD Fund Request Amount

1. In the designated field, enter the total amount of BEAD funds requested for this project unit. Do not include costs related to BSLs that are proposed to be removed from the project. Ensure that the amount is in whole dollars (no cents).




## Enter Contributed Match Funds

1. Specify the total contributed match funds, including amounts from the applicant and any third-party or government contributions. This amount should also be in whole dollars.

Entries are required in these fields, i.e., system validations will not allow a user to submit an application without entries in these fields. They cannot be left blank for any project unit. For an application with multiple project units selected, the applicant must enter BEAD Funds Requested and Contributed Match Funds for EACH project unit. Although zero (0) is a valid entry for both fields, entering a zero in the BEAD Funds Requested field is requesting $0 for that project unit.

Applicants cannot aggregate funding requirements into a subset of the project units included on the application. Any applicant that includes $0 entry for BEAD Funds for a project unit, and that ultimately is awarded that project unit per Wisconsin's rules, will be expected to deploy network for all locations in that project unit without any BEAD funding.

## Tips for Completion

- Click the "Save Responses" button periodically to avoid data loss.
- For applications with many project units, it may be easier to tab through these inputs.

- Each project unit that has valid inputs will have a green border. Those with errors will have red borders.

## 3.4 General

### Sources for BEAD Match Contributions

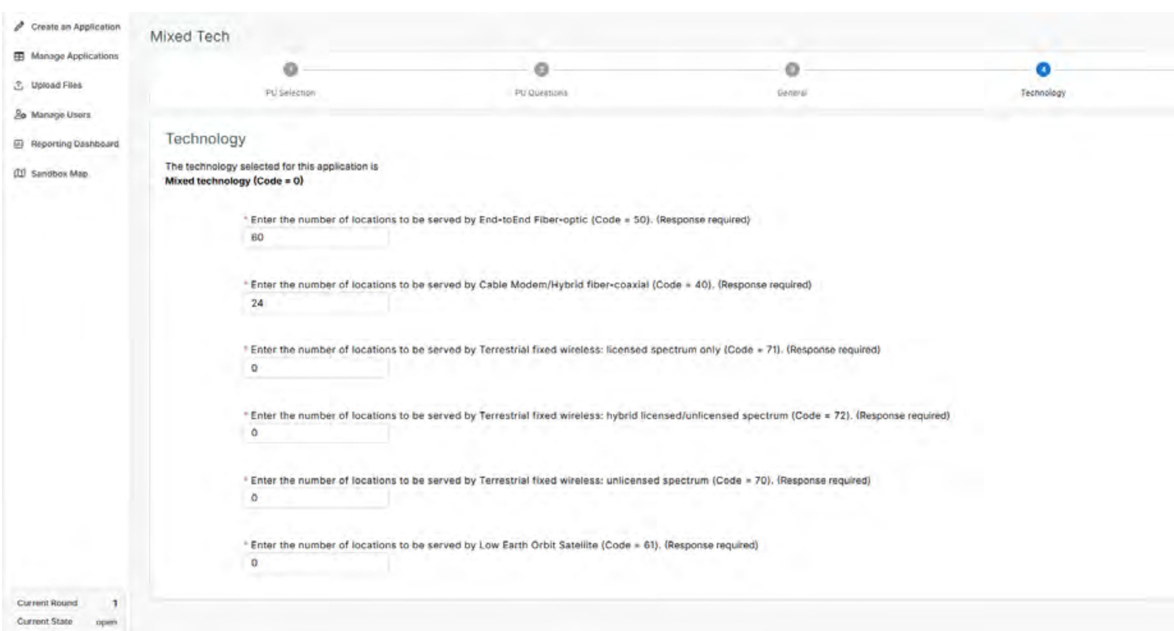
For the total contributed match funds across all project units in the application, list the third-party source(s) and amounts for each.

### Priority Project Designation

1. Applicant is required to respond to whether the proposed project is requesting treatment as a Priority Broadband Project.
    a. If so, the applicant must upload the PSC template to provide details of the proposed project.
    b. If the applicant is not seeking treatment as a priority broadband project (responds “no”), the applicant must provide a brief summary of the proposed network design, planned performance, latency, and resiliency.

## 3.5 Technology

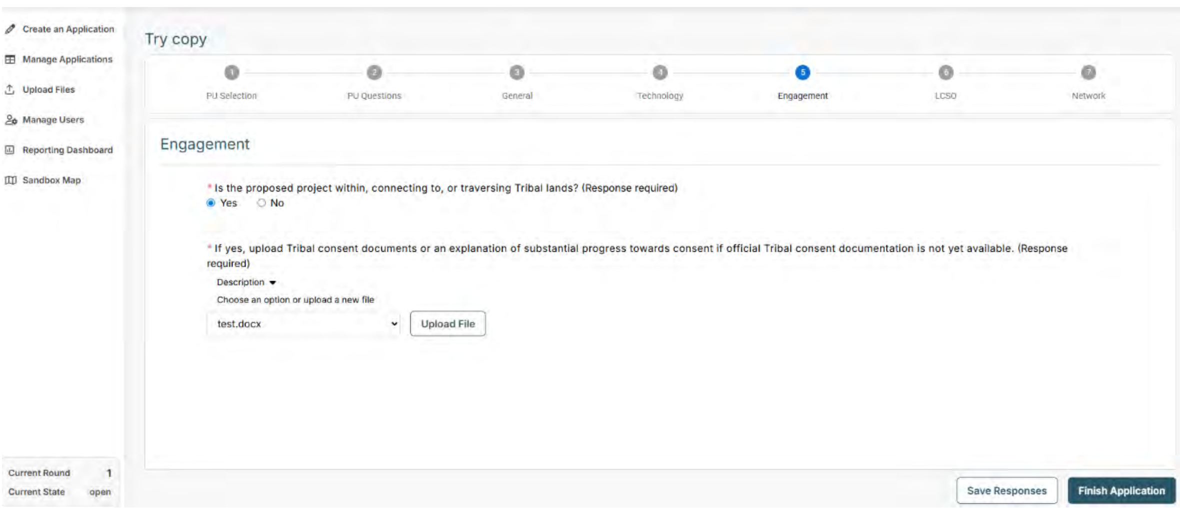
This section identifies the technology selected for this application on the create application page. If the application technology was Mixed Technology, the applicant will need to specify the quantity of BSLs for each technology.



## 3.6 Engagement

### Tribal Consent

1. Applicant must identify if the proposed project is within, connected to or traversing Tribal lands.
    - If the applicant responds "yes," Tribal consent documents, or explanation of substantial progress toward consent, must be uploaded.

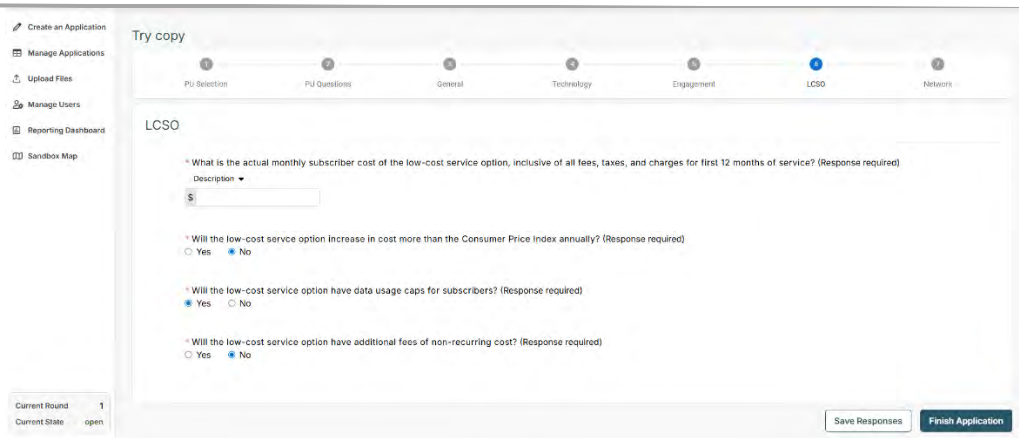



## 3.7 Low Cost Services Option

### LCSO Commitments

The applicant must provide the requested details for the LCSO required.

1. Provide the actual monthly subscriber cost inclusive of all fees, taxes, and charges for the first 12 months of service.
2. Indicate if the LCSO will increase more than the CPI annually. If so, provide an explanation.
3. Indicate of the LCSO will have data caps for subscribers.
4. Indicate if the LCSO will have additional non-recurring fees. If so, an explanation of the fees is required.




Tips for Completion

- Click the "Save Responses" button periodically to avoid data loss.
- Double-check uploaded files for accuracy and completeness.

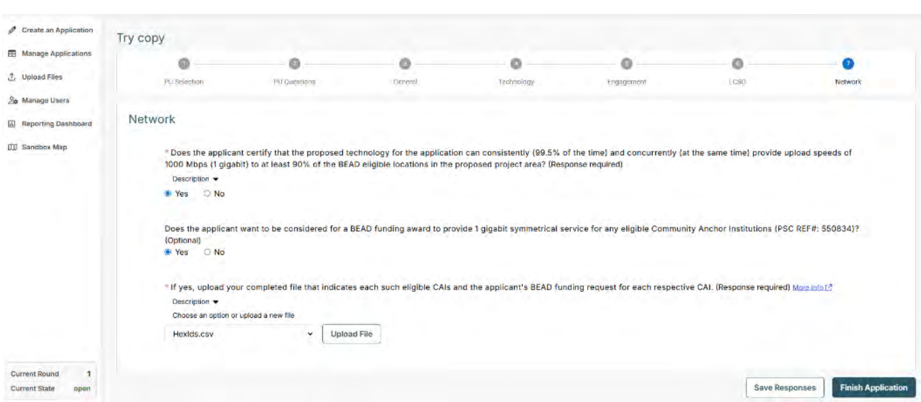
## 3.8 Network

Applicant certifies (or not) that the proposed technology for the application can consistently and concurrently provide upload speeds of 1 gigabit per second to at least 90% of the BEAD eligible locations in the proposed project area.

CAI interest – optional question

If the applicant is interested in BEAD funding for Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs), the applicant can respond "yes" and then upload a file with a list of CAI location_id as well as the BEAD funding requested for each.

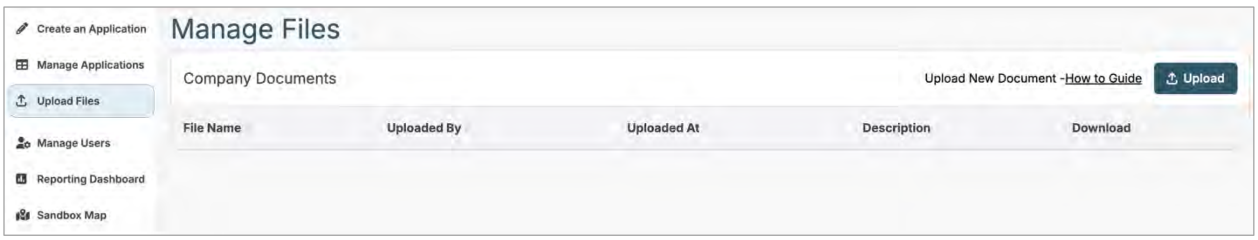
PSC has provided a template for this upload



## 4. Managing Files

### Required Uploads

1. Click "Upload Files" from the side menu to manage company documents. As noted above, the platform requires the applicant to upload several documents to support an application. Note that for the Network Design upload, Past Labor upload and Future Labor upload, the PSCW templates must be used. These can be downloaded from within the platform, from the BEAD Grant Award Management support site, or from PSC Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Grant site.




2. Select files to upload into the "Company Documents" section. Upon selecting the “Upload” icon in the upper right corner, an Upload File pop-up window will appear. In addition to the “Choose File” option, the permitted file types are displayed: pdf, docx, xlsx, csv, shp, shx, dbf, gpkg, prj, and zip. No other file types are permitted to be uploaded to the platform. The files must be created externally to the Platform. The user selects the “Choose File” button and chooses a file from their directories. If the file selected is not of an appropriate file type, or the name contains unallowed characters, the system will provide an error. The user can choose to change the file name at this point but not after it has been uploaded.
3. Once the file is uploaded, the user can add a short description of the file.
4. Files are company documents, not user specific. Thus, once a file has been uploaded to the platform, it can be used by any user on any application.
5. Files cannot be deleted once uploaded.
6. Click on the “How to Guide” on the top right for further explanation of how to upload files.

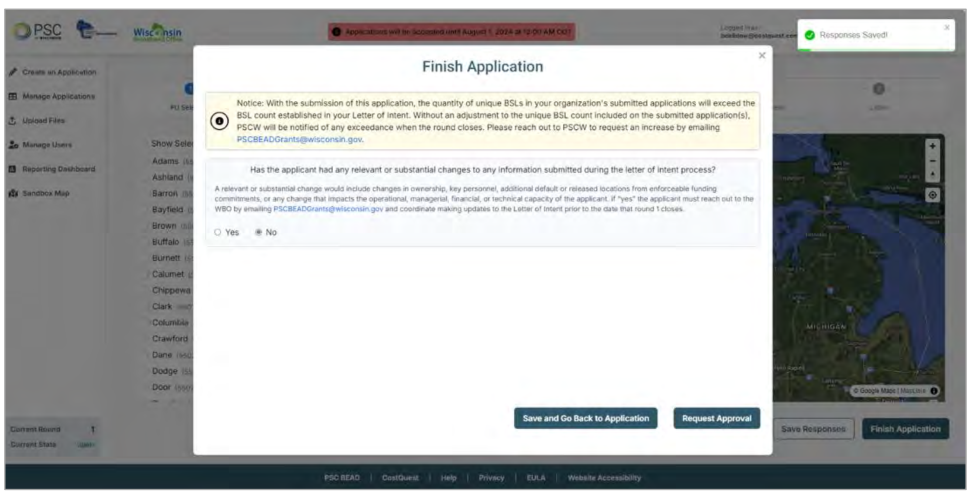
Pro Tip: Download the required templates before starting the documentation process

## 5. Submission Process

The application can be saved at any time, allowing any user to continue working on it later. Make sure to select “Save Responses.” Then, if you click Manage Applications from the left navigation pane, the application will appear with an “In Progress” status, and the edit, view, and retract action buttons will be available to all users.

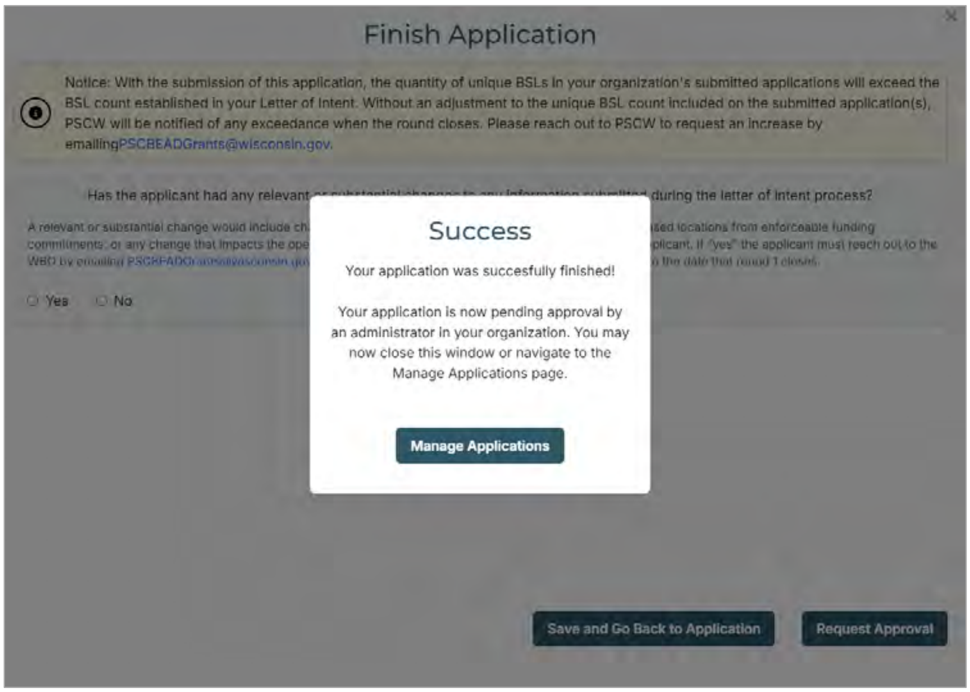
### Finish Application

- If at any time the user selects “Finish Application,” the platform will conduct a series of validations, ensuring all required questions are answered and checking the BEAD match, tribal consent, and BSL limits. The platform will identify any exceptions or errors that must be addressed.




- If there are errors, the user can return to the application to resolve the identified issues.
- For exceptions, the user can address the problems within the pop-up.
- With each application the user will be required to respond to one additional question regarding any changes to the information provided in the letter of intent. This is simply a yes-or-no question, and either response will allow the application to proceed, pending any other issues. However, a “yes” answer should prompt a call from the organization to WBO to request the LOI changes.

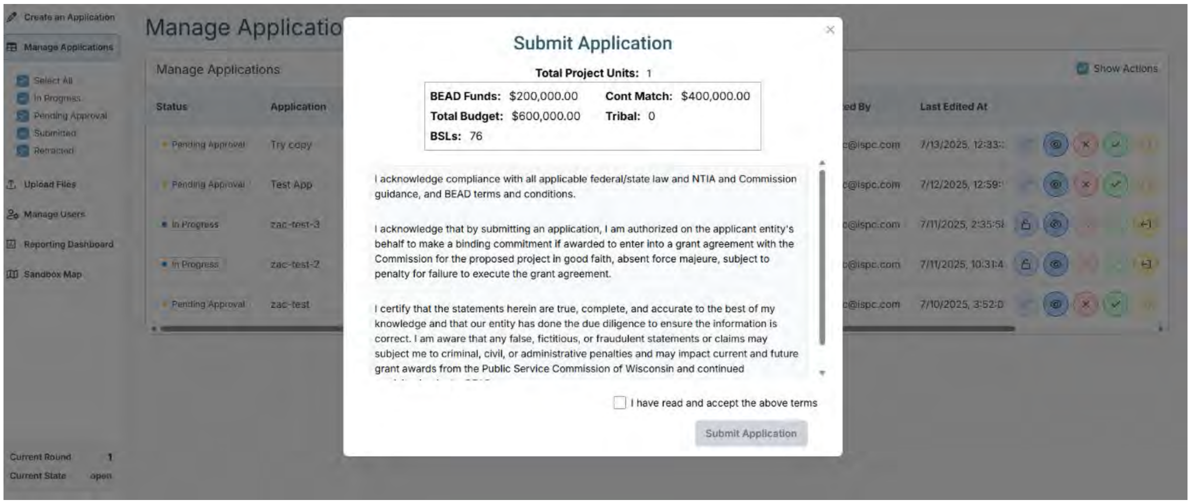
- The user can either choose “Save and Go Back to Application” or “Request Approval.” The latter changes the application from “In Progress" status to “Pending Approval," and a pop-up “Success” window appears, indicating that the application has been moved to pending approval status. **An application in this status still needs to be approved and submitted to be considered for selection/award.**




## Submit Application

**Remember:** Only Administrative Users can submit applications. Standard users can prepare applications, run validations, and move them to "Pending Approval" status.

- From the Manage Applications page, an administrative user can identify the applications in “Pending Approval” status, view the application and then approve or reject using the action buttons.
- The selection of the “Approve” button (green check) will result in the Submit Application pop-up window that includes a summary of the project unit data within the application as well as a series of statements that the Administrative User must attest to have read and commit by checking the box. Once the box is checked, the “Submit Application” button becomes available, and the Administrative User can submit the application.




# 6. Managing Applications

## ❑ Quick Reference: Manage Application

- Monitor application status
- Track decisions

Once an application has been created it will be in one of the following statuses:

- In Progress: The application is being developed and can continue to be edited by any user within the applicant organization. However, only one user can access the application at a time. Applications with the status of "In Progress" can be edited, viewed, or retracted.
- Pending Approval: The application has been created and validated by the platform as meeting the basic requirements and is available for the Administrative User to review, approve, and submit. Any user can validate an application and change its status from "In Progress" to "Pending Approval." Applications in "Pending Approval" status can be viewed, approved, or rejected; however, the latter two actions can only be performed by Administrative Users.
- Submitted: The application validated by the platform and moved to "Pending Approval" status by a user is now available for approval or rejection by an Administrative User.
  - o If the Administrative User rejects the application, it will return to "In Progress" status.

- If the Administrative User approves the application, they will have the opportunity to submit it by agreeing to a series of attestations and completing the process.

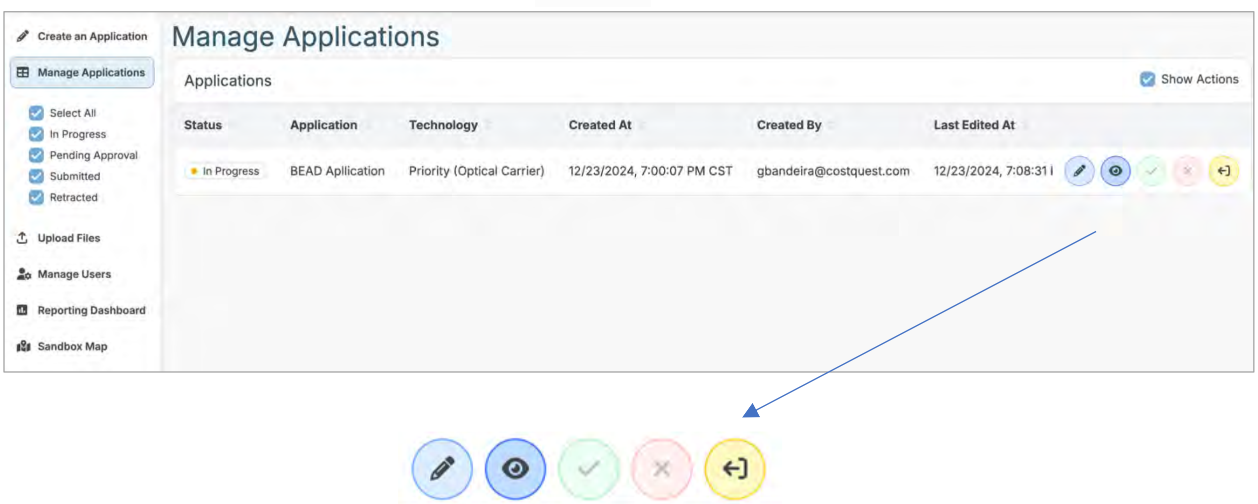
Applications in “Submitted” status can only be viewed or retracted, the latter of which can only be done by Administrative Users.

- Retracted: At any point during Benefit of the Bargain Round (as established by PSCW), the platform is open to applicants. Users can “Retract” an application from “In Progress” or “Submitted” status. Applications in “Retracted” status can only be viewed.

Important:

- Only applications that are in submitted status at the end of the Benefit of the Bargain Round will be considered by PSCW for selection/award.

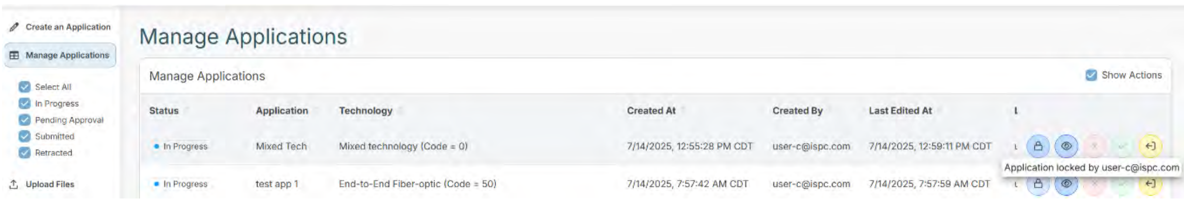
1. View all applications from the "Manage Applications" dashboard.
2. Click "Edit" to make changes to drafts or "Retract" to pull back an application.
3. Monitor application statuses (e.g., "In Progress," "Pending Approval," "Submitted," “Retracted”).



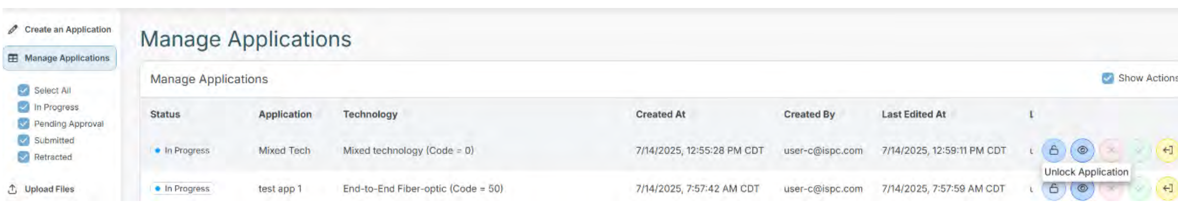

Edit | View | Approve | Reject | Retract

The filter in the left hand panel of the Manage Applications page allows the user to view applications of specific status. If none of the boxes are selected, no applications will appear within the page.

If another user has the application open for editing, the “Locked” button will appear in place of the “Edit” button to indicate that the current user is not able to edit that application. Hovering over the “Locked” icon will display the email address of the user who has that application locked.




The user who has the application locked will have an Unlock button available and may click that to allow other users to edit the application.




# 7. Reports

## Steps to Generate a Report

1. Navigate to the "Reporting Dashboard."
2. Select a report type from the dropdown menu (e.g., Application Rollup, Application Tracker, Project Unit Selection, Location ID Mapping).
3. Click "Generate."
4. Download the report in CSV format.


The following is a brief description of each report:

- Application Rollup: This includes the status, technology, BSL count, BEAD funds, and BEAD Match for each application.
- Application Tracker: This provides all inputs related to each application.
- Project Unit Selection: This identifies the project units associated with each application.
- Location ID Mapping: This identifies the location IDs and the associated project unit for each application.

An applicant's data from the original Round 1 and Round 2 are available via the reports.

## 8. Support & Resources

### ☐ Quick Reference: Support Options

- Platform Support:
- Email: mailto:wibeadsupport@costquest.com
- URL: https://wibead.zendesk.com/
- Hours: M-F, 9 AM - 5 PM EST

Normal response time is 24 hours. Resolution time depends on the issue.