



## Digital Connectivity and Navigator Grant Instruction Updates, FAQ and Deadline Extended

The Commission recently [amended the application instructions](#) for the Capital Projects Fund Digital Connectivity and Navigators Grant Program and extended the deadline by two weeks until July 3. Under the American Rescue Plan (ARPA), the U.S. Department of the Treasury allocated \$33 million to Wisconsin for the grant program. The Program is for projects that promote digital connectivity by deploying devices - such as computers, laptops, and tablets for eligible households to access. The program also promotes digital connectivity through the installation of Wi-Fi equipment in eligible multi-dwelling unit buildings, which includes apartment buildings, condominiums, and mobile home parks. Both approaches will include the provision of digital navigation services to ensure Wisconsinites can make full use of the internet for work, education, health monitoring, and other essential activities.

The Commission has posted [amended application instructions](#), an [Application Question Table](#) document, and the [new Frequently Asked Questions](#) document to the docket.

The Commission docket for the Capital Projects Fund Digital Connectivity and Navigators Grant Program is 5-CPF-2024. To ensure you receive communication regarding the grant program, [please subscribe to the docket](#).

**The application deadline has been extended to July 3, 2024 by 1:30 p.m.**

## Wisconsin Grant Panel Webinar: Digital Connectivity



**Friday May 31, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. CT** [EducationSuperHighway](#) will host a Wisconsin grant panel for entities and partners seeking to learn more about the [CPF Digital Connectivity and Navigator Grant](#) opportunity. The panel will provide interested stakeholders and potential applicants the opportunity to learn about the program and connect with other entities in the state that are considering an application or developing partnerships to complete their application.

Panelists include a Commission representative who will describe the program, including the recent updates to the Application Instructions, Tony Schloss from EducationSuperHighway on apartment Wi-Fi programs, Paul William from the City of Milwaukee Housing Authority on partnerships, and Thami Hastings from EveryoneOn on digital navigators. The meeting will conclude with a discussion and Q&A session.

Register

## Wisconsin BEAD Program Updates

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program was created under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), in order to provide access to reliable, affordable high-speed internet. The BEAD program allocates \$1,055,823,573.51 to Wisconsin.

### Internet for All Wisconsin Plan Published

Throughout 2023 and into early 2024, the Commission engaged in robust and comprehensive outreach, data collection, and planning to develop two federally required plans for Internet for All:

- The Five-Year Action Plan establishes the State's broadband goals and priorities and the Digital Equity Plan establishes the digital equity goals, values, and measurable objectives for the State.
- The Commission has created a single executive summary of both plans together in the Internet for All Wisconsin Plan. See the [Internet for All Wisconsin Plan](#).

### BEAD Challenge Process Update

In April Wisconsin BEAD Initial Proposal Volume 1 was approved and the BEAD Challenge process began. The BEAD Challenge window closed on May 29th at 1:30 p.m. CT. WBO staff will review submitted challenges, update the BEAD Challenge Map and then open a 30-day window for the rebuttal period. For BEAD challenge-related questions, eligible participants should review the new [WI BEAD Challenge Process Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) document](#). Providers should review the [BEAD Challenger Provider Contact List](#) to ensure the Broadband Office has the correct primary contact for challenge communication, particularly for sending challenges to the provider for the opportunity to rebut. To request a change to your listed contact, please email [PSCBEADChallenge@wisconsin.gov](mailto:PSCBEADChallenge@wisconsin.gov). The BEAD Challenge Process is using Commission docket 5-BCH-2024 for all related materials.

### That's a Wrap - UW Extension Preparing for BEAD Workshops Complete

Thank you to the hundreds of partners, local officials, broadband champions and internet service providers that attended one of the nine BEAD Funding: Permitting, Engagement and Learning from Experience Workshops. While the workshops are complete the [resources](#) are available online.

### Other BEAD Resources

In January NTIA released guidance on [Reliable Broadband Service & Alternative Technologies](#). The guidance provides information on types of technologies and their degree of prioritization for BEAD funding.

In March, NTIA launched a [new mapping tool](#), the [Permitting and Environmental Information Application](#), to help potential BEAD grant recipients and others deploying infrastructure identify permit requirements and avoid potential environmental impacts.

The Commission has opened the docket that will be used for BEAD implementation. The BEAD program docket is [5-BD-2025](#) and interested parties should subscribe to the docket to ensure they receive the all communications within the docket.



# Federal Broadband Updates

## Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Defaults Impact Wisconsin

On May 1, 2024, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) confirmed receipt of a letter from Charter Fiberlink CCO LLC (“Charter”) indicating they will not fulfill their Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) obligation for 57 Census Block Groups (CBGs) in Wisconsin, impacting 11,101 locations. On May 10, 2024, the FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau issued an [announcement](#) confirming the affected 57 CBGs that will no longer be constructed using RDOF funding and no longer have a RDOF enforceable funding commitment. The Commission of Wisconsin [posted a table and map](#) of the impacted locations in Wisconsin.

## Affordable Connectivity Program Wind Down and Final Payment

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) stopped accepting new applications and enrollments on February 7, 2024. The last fully funded month of the program was April 2024. In May, partial payments were available. At this time, the program is expected to end. Impacted households and stakeholders can find wind-down [resources here](#) and [consumer resources here](#).

## FCC Net Neutrality / Title II Order Published

On April 25, 2024, the Federal Communications Commission adopted a Declaratory Ruling, Order, Report and Order, and Order on Reconsideration (Order) restoring Net Neutrality and bringing back a national standard for broadband reliability, security, and consumer protection. On May 22, 2024, a notice was published in the Federal Register establishing an effective date of July 22, 2024, for these rules. Link to the Declaratory Ruling, Order, Report and Order, and Order on Reconsideration: <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-restores-net-neutrality-0>

## Resources and Items of Interest

### Human Infrastructure of Broadband Survey

The Benton Institute for Broadband & Society (in collaboration with the American Library Association, METRO’s Digital Equity Research Center & National Digital Inclusion Alliance) is conducting research to understand how digital navigator programs are being/have been conducted around the country.

[Link to the Human Infrastructure of Broadband survey](#)

### Digital Inclusion Coalition Guidebook

Published by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA), this updated guidebook is for people who are committed to working toward digital equity in their community by working together, across a variety of organizations and institutions, to advance these digital inclusion goals. It is a resource for practitioners and organizations at all stages of coalition development.

[Link to the Digital Inclusion Coalition Guidebook](#)

### What ISPs Need to Know About the FCC’s Title II / Open Internet Order

Published on the Keller and Heckman Beyond Telecom Law Blog, this short piece summarizes some potential impacts for the new FCC Order relating to reclassifying “broadband Internet access service” (“BIAS”) as a “telecommunications service” subject to the jurisdiction of the FCC under Title II of the Communications Act.

[Link to the Beyond Telecom Blog](#)

### Understanding the Location Fabric Lifecycle

Published by NTIA this document highlights the FCC National Broadband Map’s two main components (fabric and availability data) and the release schedule. It is intended to help entities understand the timeline between the fabric and internet service availability data.

[Understanding the Location Fabric Lifecycle](#)



## Grant Recipient Corner

### Project-Related Expenses, Exclusive Grant Funding

Successful grant management requires attention to details in your grant agreement (GA), in particular managing the project scope and staying within the budget. Key to this is tracking and reporting of project-specific expenses and maintaining exclusive funding provisions.

To be reimbursable or qualify as match, all expenses must be *directly attributable* to the grant project defined in the GA. Grantees should have proper tracking systems in place to ensure accurate reporting of grant expenses and retain records for periods outlined in the GA.

Grant awards are exclusive funding and funds must be used only for the project defined in the GA. The GAs defines the approved project scope and budget. Scopes cannot be changed without the Commission’s prior approval; budget changes also require prior approval. Refer to the GA for details.

And remember, only invoices that have been fully paid may be claimed for reimbursement.

### WBO Newsletter



The Wisconsin Broadband Office will send out regular communication to internet service providers, grant applicants and broadband stakeholders. We aim to be relevant and share timely information from our office.

Please reach out if anyone from the Wisconsin Broadband Office can be of assistance or if you would like to request a staff member attend a meeting or make a presentation to your group. [Email Us](#)

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