
BEAD Workforce Development Program Procedures

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State of West Virginia

West Virginia Department of Economic Development



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Introduction

Workforce Development

The West Virginia Department of Economic Development (WVDED), in coordination with the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council and the State Broadband Office, intends to award \$50 million in grant funds – contingent on the availability of Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funds for non-deployment activities – to expand broadband workforce development activities across West Virginia.

WVDED is seeking applicants in any of the following categories: higher education institutions; career and technical education institutions and career and technical student organizations; public-private partnerships; county boards of education & K12 institutions; workforce development organizations; broadband industry associations; and broadband industry employers.

Broadband workforce development activities eligible for funding include but are not limited to: certificate programs; micro credentials; postsecondary programs; wraparound support services; flexible, tailored trainings; soft skills training; and registered apprenticeship programs.

In line with NTIA requirements, the Broadband Industry Workforce Development Grant applications are expected to open in the spring of 2024. Awardees will be selected and notified at the end of 2024, following the approval of West Virginia's BEAD Final Proposal. Grant agreements are expected to be signed in early to mid-2025.

WVDED recognizes the importance of workforce development in supporting broadband deployment initiatives. Therefore, WVDED will encourage the NTIA to release workforce funding sooner to expedite the timeline and will supplement BEAD funds with other State funds to support planning efforts.

Program Overview

The West Virginia Department of Economic Development (WVDED) is committed to developing its broadband industry workforce to ensure that West Virginia has the talent it needs to meet the State's ambitious broadband deployment goals. West Virginia's BEAD [5-Year Action Plan](#) and [Initial Proposal Volume II](#) provide further information about WVDED's workforce landscape, needs, goals, and priorities.

The goal of the Broadband Industry Workforce Development Grant Program is to empower West Virginia institutions to build or expand equitable and accessible education and training opportunities so more West Virginians can enter the broadband industry.

To support this Workforce Development program, WVDED will braid together funding from the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA),¹ from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), State funds, and other funding sources.

Eligible workforce development activities under this program include but are not limited to developing certificate programs; postsecondary programs; wraparound support services, including, but not limited to, transportation and childcare; flexible, tailored training; soft skills training and registered apprenticeship programs.

Eligible Programs



¹ BEAD is a \$42.45 billion program enabled by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021.

Eligible Subrecipients/Grantees

Entities eligible to apply for workforce subgrants include:

- a) Higher education institutions in West Virginia;
- b) Career and Technical Education institutions and Career and Technical Education student organizations;
- c) Public-private partnerships;
- d) County Boards of Education,
- e) K-12 schools and K-12 school districts;
- f) Workforce development organizations;
- g) Industry associations; and
- h) Employers.

Applicants must have a current [Certificate of Existence](#) from the West Virginia Secretary of State if required under West Virginia law or be an accredited academic institution. Applicants must have no prior default or significant violations under any Federal, state, or local broadband funding program, must be able to provide certifications required under the BEAD program regarding debarment, suspension, and other responsibility matters, and must meet all other applicable federal requirements for a BEAD subrecipient. Proposals by applicants are subject to review and possible approval, denial, or modification under the Review Guidelines.

Application Deadline

The application deadline is: **TBD**

Funding Schedule and Amounts

WVDED is committed to supporting broadband industry workforce development to the fullest extent possible. To do so, WVDED will fund this workforce development initiative by leveraging multiple funding sources. The primary source of funding will be from the BEAD program, which allocates funding to West Virginia through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). West Virginia must use BEAD funding first for “deployment activities” that will deliver broadband service to unserved and underserved locations but may also use some BEAD funding for “non-deployment” activities once unserved and underserved locations are fully addressed.

Although exact funding levels are yet to be determined for non-deployment initiatives, WVDED anticipates \$50 million to invest in workforce development. WVDED will determine BEAD funding levels remaining for this program and other non-deployment activities after selecting deployment projects through a deployment grant program running concurrent with this one. For details on the BEAD apportionment formula, please see West Virginia’s [BEAD Initial Proposal Volume II](#).

Actual funds awarded will depend on the volume of applications received, the grant support needed for proposed projects, and the requirements of the NTIA. WVDED reserves the right to reevaluate program outcomes and reallocate funds to other announced grant programs or create new programs. WVDED reserves the right to reject any or all applications made to the Program.

Eligible & Ineligible Expenses

WVDED's Broadband Industry Workforce Development Grant is a reimbursement program and projects receiving funding may be reimbursed for eligible expenses up to the maximum grant amount, as identified in the award. WVDED shall, at the request of the awardee, optionally allow cash advances of up to 30 calendar days for anticipated cash needs, with true-up required by the awardee at the end of each 30-day period.

Eligible Expenses

West Virginia Department of Economic Development (WVDED) will fund activities undertaken by subgrantees in service of advancing the State's Broadband Industry Workforce Development priorities. Grant funding must be used only for expenditures associated with developing and running workforce programs. Eligible grant activities and costs include:

1. Equipment acquisition costs to be solely used for the successful implementation of broadband industry workforce development;
2. Facility rental or acquisition costs, including facility leases;
3. Professional services, including but not limited to project management, marketing, and/or communications costs associated with program activities;
4. Training and professional development for staff implementing workforce development activities;
5. Providing for wrap-around services including childcare, transportation and stipends
6. Scholarships for program participants
7. Other upfront costs not already covered in other categories; and
8. Internal labor costs incurred as part of eligible grant activities up to the proportion of employees' time spent exclusively on grant activities during the period for which reimbursement is sought. When seeking reimbursement, applicants must submit such costs as line-items and provide supporting documentation for the expense. Supporting documentation shall include time spent by each employee on project activities, total time spent by each employee during the period for which reimbursement is sought, and an hourly cost that may include employee salary, itemized payroll taxes and benefits.

Ineligible Expenses

Costs that appear excessive and/or without justification and costs not considered eligible will not be reimbursed. Costs that appear excessive and/or without justification and costs not considered eligible will not be reimbursed. Ineligible costs may not be paid for with grant funds.

Ineligible costs include:

1. Indirect costs.
2. Internal administrative activities, other than those required for administration of grant funds received under this program;
3. Fundraising activities;
4. Computers or office equipment not used solely for the implementation of the program;
5. Equipment owned or leased by entities other than the grantee or subgrantees;
6. Expenses incurred prior to the date of the grant award announcement;
7. Payment of interest or principal on outstanding debt instruments, or other debt service costs;
8. Fees or issuance costs associated with the issuance of new debt;

9. Satisfaction of any obligation arising under or pursuant to a settlement agreement, judgment, consent decree, or judicially confirmed debt restructuring plan in a judicial, administrative, or regulatory proceeding;
10. To support or oppose collective bargaining, whether directly or indirectly;
11. To purchase or support any covered communications equipment or service (as defined in Section 9 of the Secure and Trusted Communications Network Act of 2019)²;
12. To supplant amounts of existing funding WVDED would otherwise make available for the same purposes as these BEAD non-deployment funds; and
13. Profits, fees, or other incremental charges above actual cost incurred by the Applicant.

Timeline

Applicants offering workforce development services must begin providing funded services to their population and/or area of interest no later than one year after the date that the applicant receives an award from WVDED. Awards to selected applicants shall be made following certification that all unserved and underserved areas are covered under BEAD deployment programs (expected early 2025).

Program Priorities

WVDED will prioritize programs that result in a short-term credential of value and/or include work-based learning.

Short-Term Credential Training Programs

Demand for credentials with industry-wide recognition has grown in recent decades and accelerated in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. For West Virginia to quickly grow its broadband workforce, WVDED will prioritize the development of high value, non-degree credentials that lead to employment or further education that are:

- a) Designed to demonstrate competencies for targeted, job-relevant skills that can be tailored to meet labor market demand,
- b) Shorter and significantly cheaper than a traditional degree program, and
- c) Offered by a variety of providers including colleges, universities and technical schools, industry groups, and other training providers.

Work-Based Learning

WVDED will prioritize applicants that include Registered Apprenticeship (RA) or Pre-Registered Apprenticeship programs that support the broadband sector.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs): A Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally recognized credential.³

² See 47 U.S.C. § 1608 and FCC Covered List at <https://www.fcc.gov/supplychain/coveredlist>.

³ Apprenticeship USA, US Dept of Labor: <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/career-seekers>

Pre-Apprenticeship Programs: Pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals for entry into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) or other job opportunities. Pre-apprenticeships may last from a few weeks to a few months and may or may not include wages or stipend. Pre-apprenticeship programs have varied program elements; however, at the core, places an individual on a pathway to employability through a RAP.

In alignment with the State's Digital Equity Plan, WVDED will prioritize applications that engage with covered populations to provide wrap-around services for participants in broadband-related training programs.⁴

General Qualifications

Prior to entering into a grant agreement with the Applicant, WVDED must ensure that Applicants will meet three general qualifications under the Program. Applicants must be capable of carrying out activities funded by the subgrant in a competent manner in compliance with all applicable laws; they must have the financial and managerial capacity to meet the Applicants' commitments under the subgrant; and they must have the technical and operational capability to provide the services promised in the subgrant in the manner contemplated by the subgrant award.

Certification of Compliance with Relevant Laws

If awarded projects, subgrantees must comply with a range of laws and regulations relevant to this federally funded program. Applicants must therefore certify that they will comply with all applicable Federal, state, and local laws relevant to carrying out their grant agreement. These requirements will be outlined in compliance guidance that will be communicated through the WVDED website and grant agreement materials.

Application Requirements

Entities applying for subgrants through WVDED's Broadband Industry Workforce Development Grant Program should use the list below as a structural guide for their application. For assistance with the application process, WVDED encourages applicants to leverage the resources available to them through the West Virginia Grant Resource Centers.

Entity and Contact Information

Applicants must provide a complete set of relevant company/entity information and any accompanying materials and information to demonstrate the accuracy of that information. This includes, at a minimum:

⁴ Ibid Apprenticeship USA

- Legal entity name and any relevant doing business as (DBA) names;
- Address of entity headquarters and other key locations;
- Type of Entity (i.e. non-profit, partnership, LLC);
- Entity history and brief overview;
- Contact information of authorized individual submitting application on behalf of the applicant (name, title, phone number, email; and
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).
- NOTE: Each Applicant must obtain a UEI and provide it to the WVDED, but Applicants are not required to complete the full SAM.gov registration to obtain a UEI.⁵

Executive Summary

This section should not exceed two pages in length, and should include a project title, name, geographic service area, and the following information:

- **Project Purpose:** Summarize the purpose of proposed project in a single sentence.
- **Non-BEAD Funding Sources:** Provide amounts of all non-BEAD funding below (if applicable).
- **Project Description:** 1-2 Paragraphs describing major activities to be conducted. The description should address the population and region (county or counties) served, programs offered and timeline.
- **Credential of Value Introduction (if applicable):** 1 paragraph max. Introduce the credential of value to the broadband industry associated with the project. The description should address the who, what, when, and why pertaining to the credential's conferral and importance.
- **Strategic Rationale:** 1 paragraph max. Identify the problems and/or opportunities the project will address.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** 1 paragraph max. Identify local, regional and/or state partnerships that will support the project, if applicable. Include a description of how internet service providers and employers will be engaged. You may attach letters of engagement or similar documentation that verify partnerships as appendices to your application package.
- **Organizational Capacity and Project Sustainability:** 1 paragraph max. Describe capacity to undertake the proposed activity by describing previous experience with similar activities. Describe how your organization is planning to sustain the project after the grant funding period.
- **Performance Measures:** Identify quantifiable output and outcome measures.

Project Narrative

This section should not exceed eight pages in length.

⁵ For more information on the establishment of a UEI, please visit <http://www.sam.gov>.

Needs Statement

- List the primary need(s) that the project will address, citing the State Digital Equity Plan, Five-Year Action Plan, and/or Initial Proposal Volume I/II as evidence of this need in the geographic service area where applicable.

Project Description

- Describe the project's primary purpose, goals, objectives, main activities, and expected outcomes and impacts, including, if applicable, projected number of participants trained.
- Describe measures taken to ensure project skills/training/etc. programs are affordable to the participant and include paid work experience, where applicable.
- Describe measures taken to ensure participants have the support services, such as transportation and childcare, they need to enter and successfully complete skills/training/etc. programs.
- Describe how historically underrepresented individuals will be recruited to participate.
- Fully describe plans to confer the credentials to participants. Fully justify the credential's value to the broadband industry. Explain type of credential, validity period, assessments, etc.
- Identify the geographic service area where the proposed project will be based and counties in the project's entire service area. If the project is not countywide, identify the cities and towns of the project's entire service area.
- Provide a detailed work plan that includes a description of all major project activities (what will be done and by whom) and timelines for each activity during the course of the project. Include as many details as possible.
- Further details on requested information for program elements will be forthcoming, they will include (but not be limited to) program mission, learning outcomes/skills, how skills will be assessed, anticipated enrollment, etc.

Strategic Rationale

- Describe any problems, opportunities, or local/regional demand that the project will address beyond what is identified in the State Digital Equity Plan, Five-Year Action Plan, and/or Initial Proposal Volume I/II, and how these issues impact the community.
- Explain why the proposed project is the most beneficial way to achieve the desired results when compared to alternative approaches.
- Describe other project benefits likely to result from the project (e.g., positive impact on future economic development activity in the area).
- If the proposed project is a continuation or expansion of an ongoing program (whether or not the program received federal funding), describe the program's outputs and outcomes to date, as well as other project milestones reached.
- If the proposed project is new, include evidence from peer-reviewed sources or studies demonstrating that this approach has been successful in the past.

Performance Measures

- List expected outputs and outcomes of the project.
- Provide a credible and established methodology for estimating each performance measure (i.e., expected outputs and outcome) that results from the project.
- If project has "jobs created," "jobs retained," or "leveraged private investment" as a performance measure, attach letters or other evidence (e.g., economic impact analysis) documenting job or investment commitments.

- Number of individuals trained and discussion for the need for these skills to meet BEAD workforce needs.

Collaborative Partnerships

- Describe any partnerships or collaborations with other local community, state, regional, and Federal partners in the development of the proposed project.
- Detail any training providers and employers who collaborated in the development of the proposed project, highlighting ISPs who participate in BEAD deployment grant programs, if any.
- Provide letters of engagement from partner organizations that commit to undertake specific activities in support of the project.

Project Sustainability and Capacity

- Briefly describe applicant's capacity to undertake the proposed project by describing previous experience with similar initiatives.
- Describe experience in managing grants and federal awards.
- Describe the qualifications of key individuals who will manage and operate the project. Attach position descriptions or brief resumes of these individuals (1 page max).
- Describe the desired qualifications of all consultants and subcontractors, if any, and describe the competitive procedures that will be used to select them.
- Explain how the project will achieve long-term sustainability once BEAD non-deployment support is no longer available. Include a plan and timeline of efforts to secure other sources of support for future operations.
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Budget Information and Supporting Materials

Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative

- Provide a detailed budget that lists the sources and uses of BEAD non-deployment funds and any other additional non-BEAD funds, if available.
- Provide a budget narrative that includes a detailed explanation of expenditures by line item. Include purpose of travel and supply/equipment lists.
- If the budget includes personnel or contractual expenses (cash or in-kind resources), estimate the number of hours/days and hourly rate (or portion of FTE and salary) for the time that is expected to be spent on the proposed project by key personnel, contractors, or consultants. (After grant is awarded, all time should be tracked by actual hours worked for each individual.)

Non-BEAD Funding Sources

- If applicable, identify each non-BEAD funding source as federal, state, local, or private. Include a letter of commitment from each funding source that specifies the amount of funds committed and the kind of funds committed (grant, loan, cash, in-kind, etc.).
- Provide descriptions of in-kind resources, including the methods used to determine their value.

Additional Documentation

- Enclose pertinent supporting materials that will lead to a better understanding of the proposed project.
- Do not include form letters.

Application Review

Below are the criteria which will be used to score applications during the competitive review process. Applicants should adhere to these requirements to ensure their application has the best chance of being selected.

Credential of Value	Max points: 30
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To receive 30 points:

Proposed project must result in a credential of value to the broadband industry, such as a degree, certification, or other credential that will improve career opportunities for recipients. The value of this credential must be justified in the project description, along with any relevant details or plans surrounding conferral or validation of the credential.

Joint Development	Max points: 30
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To receive 20 points:

Proposed project must be developed in partnership with training providers and employers. Collaboration with training providers and employers should be fully detailed in the Collaborative Partnerships section of the Project narrative, including a summary of contributions for each organization.

To receive up to 10 additional points:

In the description of partnerships with training providers and employers, include details surrounding collaboration with ISPs participating in BEAD deployment grant programs with the same specificity defined above.

Efficiency and Efficacy of Program	Max points: 20
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To receive 20 points:

Application must demonstrate that the project can be completed cost effectively and within the grant period. If the applicant is applying to fund an existing program, cost effectiveness and timeframe of graduation and job placement will be considered.

Ease of Access	Max points: 20
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To receive 10 points:

Proposed project must be affordable to the participant and include paid work experience. Plans to ensure affordability and provide paid work experience should be fully detailed in the Project Description section of the project narrative.

To receive an additional 10 points:

The geographic reach of the proposed project must extend so rural residents can reasonably participate.

Wrap-Around Services**Max points: 10****To receive 10 points:**

Application must detail plans to ensure participants have the support services they need to successfully complete the program. This should be fully detailed in the Project Description section of the project narrative.

Grant Distribution Agreement and Standard Terms

Awardees will be required to enter into a Grant Distribution Agreement (GDA) with WVDED. Additional terms may be required by U.S. Department of Commerce. All projects will include a retainer equal to 10% of awarded funds withheld until project completion and until all close-out documents and reporting are submitted and approved. To the extent necessary, WVDED reserves the right to create additional requirements that awardees must fulfill prior to disbursement of funds.

Grant Recipient Obligations and Post Award Monitoring

Awardees of grant funds must comply with post-award monitoring and reporting requirements to maintain continued eligibility for disbursement of grant funds. Awardees are responsible for active technical, financial, and project management of awarded projects through their own staff and or by hiring and managing well-qualified contractors. Awardees should also expect to cooperate with technical and financial monitoring and review provided by WVDED contractors and staff.

Certification of Compliance with BEAD Requirements

WVDED will utilize and implement processes to ensure subgrantee compliance with BEAD program requirements as part of a post-award subgrantee monitoring process, including:

- Budget Amendments
- Invoice Submittals
- Grant Disbursement Requests
- Compliance Reporting
- Clawback/Recoupment of Funds
- Audits/Monitoring
- Civil Rights Compliance

- Cybersecurity and Supply Chain Risk Management

These requirements will be outlined in compliance guidance that will be communicated through the WVDED website and grant agreement materials.

Compliance with Federal Funds Obligations

In general, recipients and subrecipients of federal funds must comply with IJA/BEAD funding recipient obligations, in addition to reporting obligations. Awardees should expect to comply with requirements of other applicable federal statutes, regulations, and executive orders applicable to recipients of federal funds. Awardee obligations are more fully described in the WVDED's *Guide to Reporting and Compliance Obligations for West Virginia BEAD Broadband Investment Plan Subrecipients*.⁶ Applicants should review this *Guide* as well as the applicable guidance provided and requirements as identified by the NTIA and the Department of Commerce.

⁶ This document will be made available at <https://broadband.wv.gov>.