

West Virginia BEAD Workforce: FAQ

Updated November 25, 2024

Disclaimer: The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has approved [West Virginia’s Initial Proposal Volume 2](#). In the event of any discrepancy between this FAQ document and West Virginia’s BEAD Workforce Development Program Procedures as approved by NTIA, the requirements of the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program will prevail. See guidance below from the West Virginia Department of Economic Development (WVDED).

#	Question	Last Updated
1	<p>What is the goal of the workforce development grant program?</p> <p>The goal of the workforce development grant program is to build or expand equitable and accessible training opportunities to support the broadband industry and ensure that West Virginia has the talent it needs to meet the State’s ambitious broadband deployment goals.</p>	
2	<p>What types of entities are eligible to apply?</p> <p>Entities eligible to apply include Broadband industry associations, Career and Technical Education institutions, County Boards of Education, Employers, Higher education institutions, K-12 schools and school districts, Public-private partnerships, and Workforce development organizations.</p>	
3	<p>What are the program priorities?</p> <p>Program priorities include the (1) development of high value credentials, including degrees, micro-credentials and certificates, (2) creation of Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs that provide work-based learning opportunities and employment pathways, and (3) provision of wrap-around services for participants such as childcare, transportation, or stipends.</p>	

4	<p>What are the evaluation criteria?</p> <p>Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:</p> <p>Credential of Value: The 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 (30 points maximum).</p> <p>Joint Development: The proposed project must be developed in partnership with training providers and employers (30 points maximum).</p> <p>Proposed projects that include collaboration with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) participating in the BEAD deployment grant programs will receive additional points under the Joint Development evaluation criteria (10 points maximum).</p> <p>Efficiency & Efficacy: Applicants must demonstrate they can complete the proposed project cost-effectively and within the grant period. If the applicant is applying to fund an existing program, cost-effectiveness, graduation timeframe, and job placement will be considered (20 points maximum).</p> <p>Cost to Participants: The proposed program must be offered at reasonable cost to participants and include paid work experience (10 points maximum).</p> <p>The geographic reach of the proposed project must extend so rural residents can reasonably participate (10 points maximum).</p> <p>Wrap-Around Services: Applicants must detail plans to ensure participants have the support services they need to complete the program successfully (10 points maximum).</p>	
5	<p>What is a credential of value?</p> <p>A "credential of value" refers to a qualification, certification, degree, or other formal recognition that equips an individual with knowledge, skills and abilities valued in the labor market. These credentials enhance employability, support career advancement, and align with industry or employer demands.¹</p>	

¹Lumina Foundation, *Education Levels Nationally*,
<https://www.luminafoundation.org/topics/todays-students/education-levels/>

6	<p>In terms of joint development, what partnerships does the grant opportunity prioritize?</p> <p>The grant program prioritizes partnerships between training providers, wrap-around service providers, and employers, particularly ISPs participating in the BEAD deployment grant programs.</p>	
7	<p>How can applicants demonstrate efficiency and efficacy?</p> <p>Applicants can demonstrate a cost-effective, efficient project through the submission of their proposed budget. The budget should be reasonable and addresses all costs required to implement the proposed program. Cite past program expenses when applicable. Applicants should detail key milestones and outline appropriate timelines for program completion and/or job placements. Applicants can also submit letters of commitment to demonstrate plans for program sustainability beyond the grant funding.</p>	
8	<p>What is a wrap-around service? Where can I learn more about what is available?</p> <p>Wrap-around services support program participation by addressing barriers that may prevent someone from attending or completing a workforce development program. WVDED and its partners recognize the importance of a holistic approach to workforce development that includes wrap-around services for adult workers and those in training. Examples include but are not limited to: transportation stipends, childcare support, program tutoring, employment services, etc.</p> <p>Please see WVDED’s wrap-around services resource document for information about wrap-around services in West Virginia.</p>	
9	<p>What is considered work-based learning?</p> <p>WVDED has a strong preference for the integration of work-based learning into applications. WVDED will prioritize applicants that include Registered Apprenticeship programs, Pre-Registered Apprenticeship programs, Internships and/or experiential learning opportunities. Learn more about work-based learning: https://www.nga.org/work-based-learning/</p>	
10	<p>Is there a match requirement?</p> <p>No, there is no match required but applicants are invited to include any match or current resources leveraged in your budget and narrative.</p>	
11	<p>What is the period of performance?</p> <p>The period of performance for the Workforce Development Grant program is four (4) years.</p>	

12	<p>When will the grant open?</p> <p>The Workforce Development Grant Program is set to open early spring, anticipating March of 2025.</p>	
13	<p>What is the award floor/ceiling?</p> <p>There is no award floor, but the Office of Broadband encourages collaborative applications. The award ceiling is \$5 million.</p>	
14	<p>What type of workforce development programs will be funded by this program?</p> <p>See question 3 above, Program Priorities</p>	
15	<p>What are eligible expenses under the grant?</p> <p>Grant funding must be used only for expenditures associated with developing and running workforce programs. Eligible grant activities and costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Equipment acquisition costs. (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. 	

<p>16</p>	<p>What are ineligible expenses under the grant?</p> <p>Costs that appear excessive and/or without justification and costs not considered eligible will not be reimbursed. Applicants cannot use grant funds to pay for ineligible expenses.</p> <p>Ineligible costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 before 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 the actual cost incurred by the applicant. 	
<p>17</p>	<p>What is the role of the West Virginia Grant Resource Centers?</p> <p>The West Virginia Grant Resource Centers (Grant Centers) will provide free technical assistance to entities applying for the workforce development grant. Technical assistance services include grant proposal development, including but not limited to brainstorming and refining project ideas, writing the project narrative, developing the budget documents, making connections with potential project partners and additional resources, facilitating grant project planning meetings, drafting letters of engagement, editing proposal content (i.e., proofread the project narrative and provide line edits), providing a technical review of the proposal (i.e., evaluating the project narrative and budget documents against the evaluation criteria), and supporting with the grant submission process. The Grant Centers will also help grant awardees meet reporting requirements.</p>	

<p>18</p>	<p>What data sources are available to assist in preparing applications?</p> <p>Data resources have been compiled in the following technical assistance documents.</p> <p>https://broadband.wv.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/PDF-WVDED-Workforce-Development-Resources.pdf</p> <p>https://broadband.wv.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/ONLINE-Data-Resources-WVDED-Workforce.pdf</p>	
<p>19</p>	<p>Why is data important to workforce development and program design?</p> <p>Understanding labor market and demographic data will help ensure that proposed projects are tailored to meet local economic needs and priorities. By focusing on high-demand occupations and addressing regional skills gaps, programs will better prepare workers for available jobs and support long-term economic growth.</p>	
<p>20</p>	<p>How does labor market and demographic data help grant applicants?</p> <p>Applications will be evaluated on their ability to demonstrate that proposed activities will result in a credential of value for participants, are developed in partnership with training providers, employers, and community-based organizations, and are cost effective and efficient..</p> <p>Data can be used to help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify geographic areas where occupational demand is high • Estimate potential improvements in labor force participation, wages, or unemployment to assess cost effectiveness and help assign value • Demonstrate the effect of barriers to education, training, and employment and why partners are involved 	
<p>21</p>	<p>What challenges are there to using data to describe potential programs?</p> <p>Finding and applying the appropriate data can be challenging. WVDED created a resource for applicants to understand what data is available and how to access it.</p>	
<p>22</p>	<p>What data is most appropriate and how do we get assistance?</p> <p>Reference the data resources guide and work with your partners to understand what data best justifies your proposed program. Contact the Broadband Workforce Development team for additional assistance in accessing and leveraging data resources.</p>	