

ConnectMT ARPA Program Lightning Round Guide

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Version History

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INTRODUCTION

Montana is committed to fulfill the purpose of the American Rescue Plan Act's (ARPA) directive for the expansion of broadband internet access to Montana's regions and residents that remain unserved or underserved. The Department of Administration (DOA) has established the ConnectMT Program ("Program") pursuant to the "ConnectMT Act" (SB 297) to oversee the operation of the award allocations process.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY FOR 2025

The State of Montana received an allocation of \$310 million in 2022 to support the ConnectMT Program and has approximately \$17.5 million in remaining funds to be allocated via competitive allocation awards. Applicants must commit a minimum of 20% of the proposed project's cost and commit to deploying enhanced and improved internet communications in Montana.

Such funding authority is pursuant to section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, H.R. 1319, Public Law No. 117-2; furthermore it is pursuant to Montana's 67th Legislature HB 632,¹ Implementing the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA); also pursuant to Montana's 67th Legislature SB 297, signed May 11, 2021, establishing Broadband Infrastructure Deployment Laws and establishing the Montana Broadband Deployment Program, herein referred to as the "ConnectMT Act."²

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law by the President.³ Section 9901 of ARPA amended Title VI of the Social Security Act⁴ (the Act) to add section 602, which establishes the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund, and section 603, which establishes the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (together, the Fiscal Recovery Funds).⁵ Section 9901 of ARPA also amended the Act to add Section 604, which establishes the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (Capital Projects Fund). Under the U.S. Treasury's Interim Final Rule (IFR), 31 CFR Part 35, the Secretary of the Treasury (Treasury) issued its Interim Final Rule to implement the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund and the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund. In addition, on September 20, 2021, the U.S. Treasury issued its guide for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund.⁶

¹ 67th Montana Legislature, House Bill 632, signed into law, May 11, 2021.

² 67th Montana Legislature, "Connect Montana Act", Senate Bill 297, signed into law, May 11, 2021.

³ American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) § 9901, Pub. L. No. 117-2, codified at 42 U.S.C. § 802 et seq.

⁴ 42 U.S.C. 801 et seq.

⁵ §§ 602, 603 of the Act.

⁶ "Guidance for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund For States, Territories & Freely Associated States," U.S. Department of the Treasury, 9/20/2021, (Treasury § 604 Capital Projects Fund Guidance).

The ConnectMT Broadband Office’s vision is to close the digital divide in support of Montana’s economic, workforce, health, and educational goals by ensuring reliable, affordable internet access for everyone in the state.

The purpose of this document is to provide applicants with clear and comprehensive guidance on the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round (“Lightning Round”) application process and to assist users in understanding the necessary steps, requirements, and procedures involved in submitting their applications successfully. At the end of this document, you will find a glossary with explanations of key terminology used.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Prior to entering into any subgrantee agreements, the ConnectMT Broadband Office will verify that the prospective subgrantee:

- Is capable of carrying out activities funded by the subgrant in a competent manner in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws;
- Has the financial and managerial capacity to meet the commitments of the subgrantee under the subgrant, the requirements of the program, and other requirements prescribed by the state;
- Has the technical and operational capability to provide the services promised (at least 100/20 Mbps) in the subgrant in the manner contemplated by the subgrant award; and
- Has the ability to complete the program commitments prior to September 30, 2026.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants for the Lightning Round include providers with authorization to do business in the State that have demonstrated technical, financial, and managerial resources and experience to provide broadband service or other communications services to customers in the State.

Please note: To streamline the application process for the Lightning Round, ARPA program requirements that overlap with the prequalification requirements for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program are not incorporated into this application. If a provider is interested in participating in the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round but has not prequalified for BEAD (and does not have an active ConnectMT ARPA project), please contact the ConnectMT Broadband Office at connectmt@mt.gov for direction on how to submit the required information.

ELIGIBLE PROGRAM LOCATIONS

Subsequent to the State's submission of its BEAD Final Proposal to NTIA, the vast majority of broadband serviceable locations (BSL) in Montana have been designated as having a federally enforceable commitment through the BEAD Program.

The remaining BSLs eligible for the Lightning Round are limited to those not included in the BEAD Final Proposal. These include:

1. 2,017 BSLs that were defaulted from the ConnectMT Program

2. 2,023 BSLs that are designated as unserved/underserved in the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Broadband Data Collection (BDC) Fabric v6, but which NTIA did not allow the State to include in a BEAD award and therefore do not have a federal enforceable commitment

A list of the grant-eligible BSLs was published on October 16, 2025, prior to the Lightning Round application window opening. The full list of grant-eligible BSLs can also be found within the Locations List Template on the ConnectMT website: <https://connectmt.mt.gov/>.

Additionally, applicants can view this information by accessing the version of the State Broadband Map that is made available to registered providers.

ELIGIBLE PROGRAM COSTS

There is a maximum allocation of \$10 million per project, unless the Communications Advisory Commission⁷ waives this maximum allocation on a project-by-project basis. All projects, regardless of the amount of the allocation request, will be reviewed.

The Program requires that no funds allocated under this section may be transferred or expended for any purpose other than to provide funding for projects authorized.⁸ Proposals submitted by eligible providers must not involve funds received by the proposer from other federal or state government grant or loan programs where government funding supports 100% of the proposed project’s capital costs.⁹ Funds may not be used to support noncapital expenses, including general operations of an eligible provider, nonbroadband services, marketing, or advertising.¹⁰

Eligible costs refer to the costs associated with the acquisition and installation of infrastructure in addition to and or including infrastructure related to implementation of the “middle-mile” and/or “last-mile” infrastructure that can support broadband service scalable to speeds of at least 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload.

Construction of broadband infrastructure shall account for and may include the following: project planning; obtaining construction permits; construction of facilities – including construction of both middle mile and last mile infrastructure; enhancing internet exchange points to avoid speed bottlenecks; equipment; and installation and testing of the broadband service.

⁷ The ARPA Communications Advisory Commission was created by Montana’s 67th Legislature HB 632 to oversee Montana’s ARPA funding allocation as well as the application process for internet service providers; see, <https://leg.mt.gov/bills/2021/billpdf/HB0632.pdf>.

⁸ MT SB 297, Sec. 9 (d).

⁹ MT SB 297, Sec. 5 (1).

¹⁰ MT SB 297, Sec. 4 (1).

Middle mile open network requirements are as follows:

- *Interconnection:* Recipients may allow interconnection to grant-funded facilities at any technically feasible point along the network (without exceeding current or reasonably anticipated capacity limitations). This includes, at a minimum, the physical interconnection of the recipient's facilities to a requesting party's facilities for the exchange of traffic. In addition, recipients may connect to the public internet directly or indirectly and provide requesting parties with an ability to connect to the internet. Rates and terms for interconnection shall be reasonable and nondiscriminatory.
- *Negotiate in good faith:* Recipients shall negotiate in good faith with all requesting parties (i.e., public, private, nonprofit, or other parties) making a bona fide request for interconnection or wholesale services.
- *Wholesale broadband services:* The ConnectMT Program encourages recipients to offer wholesale broadband services at rates and terms that are reasonable and nondiscriminatory.

PREVAILING WAGE LAWS

IMPORTANT NOTICE – Prevailing wage laws may apply to the proposed project:

The Montana Minimum Wage Law applies to all workers in Montana. Employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act must be paid at least the federal minimum wage but in no case can they be paid less than the wage required by Montana law. The prevailing wage laws may require higher wages for the last mile portions of proposed broadband projects.

Prevailing wage is the minimum wage that employers must pay certain workers on construction projects where state funds are used in part to fund the utility construction. Prevailing wage requirements can be either county or region specific and must be correctly applied to all appropriate internal or contractor labor.

Applicants can get more information on how prevailing wage applies to certain middle mile broadband allocations from:

Montana Department of Labor and Industry
P.O. Box 1728
Helena, Montana 59624
Phone: 406-444-2840

MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENT

To obtain a broadband deployment allocation, the applicant must provide funding in the amount of at least 20% of the proposed project cost.¹¹

These funds must be in place and deposited in a federally or state-regulated financial institution subject to verification by DOA. The applicant must provide documentation to validate the availability of matching funds designated as “broadband matching funds,” which is required as part of the application. Some examples of appropriate documentation include: a letter of credit, letter confirming funds from a financial institution, board resolution committing funding, or loan documentation. If the application will have additional financial partners contributing to the matching funds, the application must also identify the financial partner(s) and documentation of the amount and availability of each partner’s financial match. Priority consideration will be given to projects that have secured community partners who have contributed to the matching funds.

The nonmatching component of funding is subject to appropriations from general fund revenue, from bonds issued by the department, or federal broadband stimulus funds or other federal funds appropriated by Congress and allocated to the department for funding of broadband communications projects that may include ARPA funds.¹² Additionally, the U.S. Treasury issued “Guidance” for Section 604 Capital Projects Funds.¹³

Eligible project expenses are those that are incurred starting with the 2025 allocation award contract execution date and ending at the conclusion of the allocation project, or allocation project contractual term. The state allocation funding period begins after the allocation application is received, evaluated, and officially approved with an award letter and executed contract.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

APPLICATION TIMING

The Lightning Round application for the ConnectMT ARPA Program will open October 20, 2025, and will remain open until 5:00 pm MT November 3, 2025.

¹¹ Connect Montana Act, Section 5 (2).

¹² The U.S. Treasury codified Interim Rules for sections 602 and 603 of the Social Security Act, as added by section 9901 of ARPA. Federal Register / Vol. 86, No. 93 / Monday, May 17, 2021 / Rules and Regulations, 26756 – 26824, 31 CFR 35.

¹³ Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund; ICR 202109-1505-003; OMB: 1505-0274 (Federal Form Document) - published 9/20/2021. Guidance for the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund For States, Territories & Freely Associated States U.S. Department of the Treasury, pg. 3, published 9/20/2021. (Treasury § 604 Capital Projects Fund Guidance).

APPLICATION PORTAL

Users can access the Lightning Round application at this [link](#).

ASSIGNING USERS

If necessary, Administrators can add or remove users from their accounts. As a reminder, there are two user roles:

- An **Administrator** can initiate, modify, and submit an application. A user with an Administrator role must be the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)—the person who is legally able to make financial decisions, sign contracts on the applicant's behalf, and submit your application.
- An **Editor** can modify an application or collaborate but cannot submit. An Editor can be any user who is authorized to edit your application.

HOW TO START AN APPLICATION

Applications may be started from previously saved opportunities or may be started directly from the opportunity link after registering.

1. Use the [opportunity link from the funder](#) and on the Opportunity Details page, click Apply.



Figure 1: Image of the header of the Opportunity Details page

– OR –

1. Open the Applicant Portal.
2. Click the AmpliFund logo in the top-left corner of any page.



Figure 2: Screenshot of AmpliFund logo

3. Select Applications.



Figure 3: Screenshot of the banner found at the top of the Applicant Portal

4. Click an opportunity name.

5. Click Apply.



Figure 4: Image of the header of the Opportunity Details page

Generally, functionality at the bottom of each section will include the option to:

- **Save.** Save progress and remain on the current page.
- **Mark as Complete.** Indicate the form has been completed.
- **Save & Continue.** Save progress on the page and move on to the next section or form.

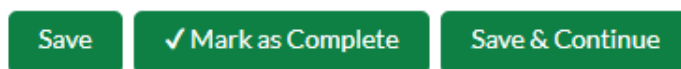


Figure 5: Buttons on the bottom of each section of the application

Each section of the application has a separate form. Forms do not need to be completed in order, but each form must be marked as Complete prior to submission. The Navigation toolbar at the top center of the application window provides quick overview of progress and easy access to all sections of the application. Once a section of the application is marked as Complete (at the bottom of each application section), a checkmark will appear on the section header.

Once all sections have been completed and the checkmark displays in the navigation timeline (Figure 6), a user with the Administrator role can click the Submit button. Once Submitted, applications cannot be modified.

NOTE: You must mark each section Complete to submit your application.



Figure 6: Application navigation timeline

HOW TO VIEW THE APPLICATIONS LIST

Saved and submitted applications can be viewed on the Applications list:

1. Click the AmpliFund or Montana logo in the top-left corner of any page.



Figure 7: AmpliFund logo (button) and Montana logo (button)

2. Click Applications to view a list of active applications.



Figure 8: Banner at the top of the Applicant Portal.

HOW TO DELETE AN APPLICATION

Once deleted, applications will no longer be accessible.

Prerequisite: Must be an Administrator, and the application cannot already have been submitted.

1. Click the AmpliFund logo in the top-left corner of any page.



Figure 9: AmpliFund logo (button)

2. Click Applications.



Figure 10: Banner at the top of the Applicant Portal

AMPLIFUND SUPPORT SITE

If you are having technical difficulties with the AmpliFund system, please use the AmpliFund support site to resolve any issues. If you have questions about application content or requirements, please email ConnectMT Broadband Office ARPA Technical Assistance at connectmttechassistance@mt.gov.

- **Submit a support ticket:** support@amplifund.zendesk.com
- **Visit the support portal:** <https://amplifund.zendesk.com>

- **Supported browsers:** Google Chrome (current supported releases), Mozilla Firefox (current supported releases), Microsoft Edge (current supported releases), Microsoft IE 11 +, and Apple Safari 10+

APPLICATION RESOURCES

The ConnectMT Broadband Office will post this application guide, templates, updated FAQ documents, and relevant application portal links to the [ConnectMT website](#). Any changes to the documents will be noted in their version history.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is not the intention of the ConnectMT Broadband Office to collect [trade secret](#), [confidential](#) or [personal](#) information, as defined by Montana law, and applicants should refer to Montana law when determining whether information is trade secret, confidential or personal. If an applicant is going to provide information in the grants management system that applicant believes contains trade secret, confidential or personal information, applicant should redact (only) the portions that contain that information, while being careful to still satisfy the purpose for which ConnectMT is requesting the information. The grants management system has the capability to receive and separately save files which applicants deem “confidential.” Files submitted by applicants as “confidential” will be maintained as “confidential” by ConnectMT Broadband Office throughout the application process. However, in the event the DOA receives a public records request for application information, DOA must review all of the application materials – including the confidential files – to determine whether any information is truly confidential and exempt from the public records request under Montana law. ([§ 2-6-1002, MCA](#)). In general, all records received and held by the DOA are “public information” and “public records” are subject to public disclosure, unless exempted from public disclosure as “confidential information.”

APPLICANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR UPLOADING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

To keep all confidential information separate from the main application records, please follow the instructions below.

Any documents deemed by the applicant to include confidential information, trade secrets, or personal information **MUST** be uploaded with “- Confidential” at the end of the file name.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCEDURES

Proposals that receive the highest application score will be prioritized for award.

The scoring criteria for the Lightning Round will not be altered from the original subgrantee selection process. However, the ConnectMT Broadband Office will update how information is presented and collected to quickly and sufficiently verify responses.

ConnectMT ARPA scoring rubric (maximum of 130 points):

- Matching funds: 15 points
- Service designation of project locations: 20 points
- Demographics of project locations: 6 points
- Scalability of network: 30 points
- Speed of deployment: 5 points
- Jobs created: 10 points
- Existing infrastructure: 10 points
- Additional community commitments: 34 points

The technical assistance webinar slide deck posted on the [ConnectMT website](#) provides additional details on the individual scoring criteria. Additionally, the subsequent sections within this guide identify and detail the scoring related to certain application questions.

LIGHTNING ROUND APPLICATION

The following sections provide a detailed explanation of each component of the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round application.

PROJECT INFORMATION

SUMMARY

After reviewing the Opportunity Details at the start of the application, applicants should proceed to the Project Information section using the “Save & Continue” button located at the bottom of the screen, or the Navigation toolbar.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Application Name: In the Project Information section, applicants will need to provide a project name. The project naming convention should be as follows to distinguish between projects in the same county:

- Applicant Name - Primary County of Project - Number (if necessary)

For example, if an ISP called Magic Fiber submitted three projects, two in Carbon County and one in Valley County, the project names would be: MagicFiber - Carbon - 1, MagicFiber - Carbon - 2, and MagicFiber - Valley. If your project area covers multiple counties, list only the primary county.

Limit names to 50 characters. No special characters with the exception of whitespace (spacebar), underscore (_), or hyphen (-) are allowed.

How much are you requesting from the funder?: Provide the number rounded up to the nearest cent.

How much are you planning to contribute to the budget?:

- **Cash Match Contributions:** Provide the number rounded up to the nearest cent.
- **Total Award Budget:** This amount is automatically calculated.

Primary Contact Information: The required fields in the primary contact information section should auto-fill based on the applicant’s registration information, but please take a moment to ensure that all fields are correct and include a phone number if available.

Name: This field will automatically include your name.

Email Address: Please enter the primary contact information for the application.

Address, City, State/Province, Postal Code: Please enter the company's address information.

Phone Number: Please enter the phone number for the primary contact.

Once all fields are completed, applicants can mark the form as complete using the green "Mark as Complete" button located at the bottom of the screen and then proceed to the next screen using the "Save & Continue" button. It is also possible to proceed without marking the form complete, but applicants will need to return to the page and mark it complete in order to submit.

TEMPLATES AND DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- None.

SECTION 1: ADMINISTRATIVE

SUMMARY

This section of the application includes company details and primary and secondary contact information.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

LR 1.01 – Did the applicant prequalify for Montana’s BEAD program, or does the applicant have an existing ARPA award in Montana? Select either YES or NO. If selecting NO, please contact the ConnectMT Broadband Office at connectmt@mt.gov for information on how to submit the information required to qualify for the Lightning Round.

LR 1.02 – Please enter the applicant’s SAM.gov UEI. Enter the registered number that the applicant is intending to use for this program.

LR 1.03 – Applicants will need to provide a project name. The project naming convention should be as follows to distinguish between projects in the same county:

Applicant Name - Primary County of Project - Number (if necessary)

For example, if an ISP called Magic Fiber submitted three projects, two in Carbon County and one in Valley County, the project names would be: MagicFiber – Carbon – 1, MagicFiber – Carbon – 2, and MagicFiber – Valley. If your project area covers multiple counties, list only the primary county.

Limit names to 50 characters. No special characters with the exception of whitespace (spacebar), underscore (_), or hyphen (-) are allowed.

LR 1.04 to LR1.18 – Applicants will need to confirm their contact information. Please use the appropriate fields prompted by AmpliFund to update your contact information.

LR 1.19 – Provide proof of good standing with Montana Secretary of State. Upload a copy of the certificate indicating the applicant’s good standing or provide an upload of a screenshot from the [Montana Secretary of State website](#) showing the applicant’s good standing.

LR 1.20 – Provide proof of general liability insurance, and insurance (could be a bond) for the intended project that covers incidents of performance. Please upload proof of coverage.

TEMPLATES AND DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- Certificate or a screenshot from the state’s website indicating the applicant’s good standing with the Montana Secretary of State; and
- Proof of insurance.

SECTION 2: METRICS

SUMMARY

This section of the application requests key metrics for the proposed broadband project, including the total project cost, the amount that will be requested as a grant, and the amount the applicant will provide as a match. You will be asked for more granular cost information later in the application, but your grant request and proposed match should add up to the total cost. The match must be cash and must be compliant with eligible expenses.

You will also be asked to provide key project metrics, such as total number of serviceable locations, route miles, and funding requests, along with a project description.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

LR 2.01 – Please provide the applicant’s proposed Total Funding Request (how much grant funding the applicant is seeking with this application). Provide the number rounded up to the nearest cent. Provide the number rounded up to the nearest cent.

LR 2.02 – Please provide the applicant’s proposed Total Match amount. Provide the number rounded up to the nearest cent.

For applicant awareness: The minimum match requirement is 20% of the project’s total cost, but the application will receive a higher score for providing more matching funds. Up to 10 points will be awarded for matching funds provided, relative to the total project cost. Points will be awarded per the following table:

Match %	Points
≥70%	10
≥50% to <70%	7
≥40% to <50%	4
≥20% to <40%	2

LR 2.02a – Please provide validation of availability of matching funds. Examples of appropriate documentation include: a letter of credit, letter confirming funds from a financial institution, board resolution committing funding, or loan documentation. If the application will have additional financial partners contributing to the matching funds, the application must also identify the financial partner(s) and documentation of the amount and availability of each partner’s financial match.

LR 2.03 – Please provide the proposed Total Project Cost, which should be the sum of 2.01 and 2.02. Provide the number rounded up to the nearest cent.

LR 2.04 – Will any matching funds be provided by a local government, Tribal entity, or school district? Select either YES or NO. If selecting YES, the applicant will be prompted to complete questions 2.04a, 2.04b, and 2.04c.

LR 2.04a – Of your total match, how much will be provided by a local government, Tribal entity, or school district? Provide the number rounded up to the nearest cent.

For applicant awareness: There is no requirement for match to be provided by either a local government, Tribal entity, or school district but the application will receive a higher score for providing matching funds from one or more of these entities. Up to 5 points will be awarded for matching funds provided, relative to the total project cost. Points will be awarded per the following table:

Match %	Points
≥30%	5
≥20% to <30%	3
≥10% to <20%	2
≥1% to <10%	1

LR 2.04b – Provide evidence validating availability of matching funds from all the above entities providing match. Documentation to validate the availability of matching funds is required, as part of the allocation application. Examples of secured funds documentation include a letter of credit, bank letter confirming available funds, board resolution committing funds, or loan documentation.

LR 2.04c – Provide notarized documentation stating all matching fund partners have reviewed the application, confirm their commitment to the project, and provide proof of the existence of matching and secured funds. The applicant and all matching fund partners must provide notarized documentation stating each has reviewed the application, confirm their commitment to the project, and provide proof of the existence of matching and secured funds.

LR 2.05 – Please provide a brief description of the project that will be used for public announcements. Include a description of area, number served, and expected outcomes. You may also include the type of facilities and service offerings. This description should summarize your project in non-technical, easy-to-understand language.

Sample Public Project Description: General Telco Company broadband expansion project is set to bring high-speed internet to [insert area name]. Serving [insert number] households and [insert number] businesses, our goal is to bridge the digital divide and spur economic growth. With improved connectivity, residents can expect enhanced educational opportunities, streamlined access to services, and increased economic development. Join us as we empower our community with the tools for a brighter future.

LR 2.06 – Please provide the anticipated number of aerial miles of fiber to provide service to the locations within the proposed project. Please round these numbers to the nearest whole mile. If this is not applicable, leave this question blank.

LR 2.07 – Please provide the anticipated number of buried miles of fiber to provide service to the locations within the proposed project. Please round these numbers to the nearest whole mile. If this is not applicable, leave this question blank.

LR 2.08 – Please provide the estimated number of employment opportunities created by the proposed project. Please provide the estimated number of employment opportunities created by the project. If the estimated number is zero, please enter “0.”

TEMPLATES AND DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- Documentation validating availability of matching funds, such as a letter of credit, letter confirming funds from a financial institution, board resolution committing funding, or loan documentation;
- If necessary, documentation validating availability of matching funds from partner(s) providing match, such as a letter of credit, bank letter confirming available funds, board resolution committing funds, or loan documentation; and
- If necessary, notarized documentation stating all matching fund partners have reviewed the application, confirm their commitment to the project, and provide proof of the existence of matching and secured funds.

SECTION 3: FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

SUMMARY

This section of the application requires applicants to provide financial statements, including unqualified or qualified audited statements. Additionally, applicants are required to submit documentation certifying their access to the available funds for all project costs that exceed the requested grant.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

LR 3.01 – Please submit unqualified audited financial statements. If unqualified statements are unavailable, provide qualified statements.

If audited financial statements are not provided here, they may be required prior to award.

LR3.02 – Please use the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Pro Forma template provided on the ConnectMT website (<https://connectmt.mt.gov/>) to provide a completed project-level pro forma detailing anticipated Capital Expenditures (CapEx), Operational Expenditures (OpEx), projected subscriber numbers (inclusive of unserved, underserved BSLs and potential subscribers), and service pricing. This projection is mandatory and must cover five years of projected financial data. Please see the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Application Guide for additional detail on what should be included in this documentation. File type restricted to Word, PDF, or Excel.

This projection is mandatory and must cover five years of projected financial data. If the project pro forma shows that the project is not cash flow positive within five years, then the applicant must demonstrate losses can be absorbed company wide. Please footnote all key assumptions from the business plan to forecast future financial performance, such as revenue and expenses, in support of the pro forma.

For applicant awareness: A project pro forma will be used to assess the project's financial feasibility and evaluate its impact on the overall financial health of the applicant. Essentially, the pro forma will reveal if the project makes fiscal sense to pursue. If a company's audited financial statements or project-level pro forma do not demonstrate cashflow positivity, it may be deemed necessary to submit a company-wide pro forma.

For applicant awareness: If the applicant opts to not use the recommended template, it is critical that the applicant ensures that the submitted pro forma includes all the necessary components outlined above.

Special instructions: If submitting multiple applications, applicants should use a standard companywide pro forma across all projects. Additionally, if the applicant opts to use the same pro forma for multiple applications, detailed assumptions for each project should be included.

TEMPLATES AND DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- Unqualified audited financial statements or qualified statements; and
- Project-level (or companywide) pro forma detailing anticipated Capital Expenditures (CapEx), Operational Expenditures (OpEx), projected subscriber numbers, and service pricing, along with all key assumptions from the business plan. (If an applicant is submitting multiple applications, they should use the same companywide pro forma for all applications. Applicants must ensure detailed assumptions for each project are included.)

SECTION 4: ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGERIAL CAPACITY

SUMMARY

This section allows applicants to submit essential organizational certifications for their broadband project proposals and address tribal land considerations. Applicants must certify operational capability to complete and operate the project. This section also contains additional compliance questions which are not used as part of the application review.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

LR4.01 – Please check the box below certifying that the applicant organization possesses the operational capability to complete and operate the project within the timeline and terms set by the subgrant.

LR4.02 – Please indicate if the application includes construction or operations on tribal lands.

NOTE: *If proposing a project on tribal lands, please contact the tribe directly or reach out to Director Misty Kuhl, Department of Indian Affairs, State of Montana at misty.kuhl@mt.gov and cc the ConnectMTTechAssistance@mt.gov website to facilitate the process of coordinating with Tribal leadership.*

LR4.02a – Please certify that the applicant has already engaged with tribal authorities and commit that if awarded, a binding tribal resolution of consent will be provided prior to receiving the final award.

LR4.02b – Please upload documentation of initiating a tribal consent process or receiving tribal consent from the appropriate tribal authority.

CERTIFICATIONS

LR4.03 – Does the applicant certify that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, its organization and its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participating in covered transactions by any federal department or agency?

LR4.04 – Does the applicant certify that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, its organization and its principals have not, within a three-year period preceding this proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, Eligible Entity, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of federal or Eligible Entity antitrust statutes or

commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property?

LR4.05 – Does the applicant certify that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, its organization and its principals have not, within a three-year period preceding this proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, Eligible Entity, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of federal or Eligible Entity antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property?

LR4.06 – Does the applicant certify that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, its organization and its principals have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (federal, Eligible Entity, or local) terminated for cause or default?

LR4.07 – Does the applicant certify it has access to the available funds for all project costs that exceed the project funding request (e.g., matching funds, initial expenses prior to reimbursement)?

LR4.08 – Does the applicant certify that the applicant, including any partnerships and consortia members, has not participated and will not participate in any collusion, bias or conflict of interest (see, Section 18-4-141 of the Montana Code Annotated 2023 and 47 CFR 1.2105) as part of this application process?

LR4.09 – Does the applicant certify that it complies with federal labor and employment laws?

LR4.10 – Does the applicant certify that it will incorporate best practices for ensuring reliability and resilience of broadband infrastructure by establishing risk management plans that account for technology infrastructure reliability and resilience, including from natural disasters (e.g., wildfires, flooding, tornadoes, hurricanes, etc.), as applicable, as well as cybersecurity best practices?

ADDITIONAL COMPLIANCE QUESTIONS

LR4.11 – As the primary grant recipient for ARPA funding, Montana has oversight responsibility for its subgrantees.

To support its initial risk assessment of the ARPA portfolio, the ConnectMT Broadband Office will review applications for operational, technical, and financial experience, including previous experience with state and federal funding. Please respond “Yes”, “No”, or “N/A” for the following compliance questions.

For applicant awareness: The responses to these questions are only used for informational purposes as Montana develops a risk analysis for its grant portfolio.

LR4.11a – Has the applicant previously received state funds (for state-supported programs) or federal funds (for federally-supported programs)?

LR4.11b – Has the applicant provided broadband internet access services for more than two years?

LR4.11c – If the applicant previously received funds from the ConnectMT Broadband Office, did the applicant return more than 10% of its grant allocation to the ConnectMT Broadband Office at the completion of the project?

LR4.11d – Has the applicant ever been subject to recoupment of payments under any federal or state grant?

LR4.11e – Does the applicant have a financial management system in place to track and record expenditures for the program?

LR4.11f – Does the applicant have a records management and retention system that allows for the preparation of required reports and tracking of funds to each program?

LR4.11g – Does the applicant have a property management system to track and record the acquisition and use of real property, equipment, and supplies?

LR4.11h – Does the applicant have policies and procedures in place to obtain insurance for real property and equipment it acquires, including through self-insurance?

LR4.11i – Does the applicant have policies and procedures in place to prevent the procurement and use of prohibited covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment?

LR4.11j – Does the applicant have policies and procedures in place to obtain required permits and comply with environmental, historic preservation, and other land use requirements?

LR4.11k – Does the applicant have established, effective procedures and internal controls that provide safeguards and reasonable assurances that the award will be managed in compliance with applicable laws and the terms and conditions of the award?

LR4.11l – Does the applicant have a time and accounting system to identify time and expenses associated with the project? If yes, please note that each project must be able to be tracked separately.

LR4.11m – Is the applicant required to provide a Budget to Actual financial report to an appropriate oversight group (e.g., committee, board members, stockholders)?

LR4.11n – Does the applicant owe any money to any division of the ConnectMT Broadband Office or to the federal government under any program where it has not arranged a repayment plan?

LR4.11o – Has a petition been filed with respect to the applicant or its affiliates under the Bankruptcy Code in the past five years?

LR4.11p – Does the applicant have policies and procedures in place to allow employees to report potential noncompliance or waste, fraud, and abuse potentially affecting the federal award?

LR4.11q – Does the applicant plan to assign staff to the project that have worked with the business for less than one year?

LR4.11r – Has the applicant received oversight monitoring for any federal or state dollars awarded?

LR4.11s – If so, were there any findings cited during monitoring activities?

LR4.11t – Is the applicant on a corrective action plan from monitoring?

LR4.11u – Does the applicant have any unresolved questioned costs or finding of fiscal inadequacy as a result of project monitoring?

LR4.11v – Has the applicant currently or previously been suspended or debarred by any federal or state agency?

LR4.11w – Is the applicant presently the subject of any litigation, or is any litigation is threatened, which would have a material adverse effect on the applicant's financial condition?

LR4.11x – Has the applicant ever been involved in bankruptcy, a creditor(s') rights or receivership proceeding, or sought protection from creditors?

LR4.11y – Has the applicant ever settled a debt with a lending institution for less than the full amount outstanding?

LR4.11z – Has the applicant ever had a senior manager or principal convicted of any felony or misdemeanor, other than a minor traffic violation, or are there are any such charges pending?

LR4.11aa – Does the applicant have any outstanding judgments or liens pending against them other than liens in the normal course of business?

LR4.12 – Certify that the applicant will offer services for a minimum of a five-year period.

TEMPLATES AND DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- If applicable, legally binding tribal resolution certifying consent and approval to build on tribal land (in Word or PDF) or evidence of beginning the process of obtaining such documentation.

SECTION 5: PROJECT PLAN

SUMMARY

This section of the application centers on the technical aspects and financial planning of the proposed broadband project. Applicants are required to submit a Project Plan to demonstrate technical capability with respect to the proposed project. The detailed design plan submission must be certified by a currently licensed Montana professional engineer before a contract can be executed; if you do not have this certification to provide with your application, be prepared to provide it in the negotiation process. The Project Plan submission must include the components listed below.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

LR5.01 – Please complete the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Locations List template for the proposed project. The template is provided on the ConnectMT website (<https://connectmt.mt.gov/>). This template should include every BSL that the project intends to serve. The file name should be Applicant Name - Primary County of Project - Location List.

LR5.02 – Upload a technical narrative as a PDF detailing how the proposed infrastructure will deliver service that reliably meets or exceeds the program required speeds and latency for all proposed BSLs. The narrative must include a discussion that comprises customer take rate assumptions, anticipated oversubscription ratios, network capacity, and construction methodology best practices. Critical details to be submitted within the narrative include:

- A detailed description of how the network will be connected to sufficient backhaul infrastructure to support the program performance requirements. Please include:
 - If the proposed network leverages backhaul infrastructure from its own existing network, describe that infrastructure and how the proposed network interconnects with it.
 - If the proposed network leverages backhaul infrastructure from another organization's existing network, describe that infrastructure, how the proposed network interconnects with it, and the negotiated terms for which the applicant will have access to the infrastructure for the life of their required service commitment.
 - If the proposed network requires construction of new backhaul infrastructure, describe that infrastructure, how construction of the infrastructure will be funded, what steps have been taken to ensure the new infrastructure will be commissioned prior to the applicant's proposed

subscriber activation dates, and how the proposed network interconnects with it.

- An explanation of the projected subscriber take rate and the anticipated level of oversubscription based on the proposed network capacity.
- A network scalability plan to meet the program performance requirements if subscriber take rate is higher than anticipated, customers subscribe to higher service level offerings than anticipated, or any other factors that may require additional network capacity.
- A detailed description of how the proposed network will be deployed using industry best practices.
 - Describe what anticipated portions of the network will be built using underground or aerial.
 - If underground construction is proposed, describe the construction methods to be used (e.g., directional drilling, trenching).
 - Describe the construction materials and equipment to be used in the network (e.g., 1.25" HDPE conduit, 144-count fiber-optic cable, Calix E7 platform) and how the selected materials support a sustainable and scalable network.

For applicant awareness: The network description details should align with the information presented in the network design shapefiles and detailed project cost estimates.

The uploaded file must be a PDF document.

LR5.03 – Please upload the applicant’s proposed network design. Please provide a proposed network design that includes all proposed BSLs served by the project, all proposed fiber infrastructure routes to be constructed via the project, and project area boundary polygons encompassing all infrastructure routes, and BSLs.

The preliminary network design will be uploaded in shapefile format.

The shapefile format is designed to store and represent various types of geographic features, such as points, lines, and polygons, along with attribute information associated with these features. A shapefile is comprised of six separate file extensions (.CPG, .dfb, .prj, .sbn, .spx, and .shp.). Shapefiles containing all six file extensions should be uploaded in a zipped folder.

The following layers shall be present in the submitted .shp files:

- The applicant's proposed BSLs shall be submitted as point feature. This layer must be named "BSL." If an applicant is submitting multiple applications, each separate application must still name each submitted file as "BSL" with no additional numbers or characters. The location data must be sourced from either the program's official map fabric or the officially published ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Locations List template. Applicants can obtain the official program BSL data by accessing the ConnectMT website.
- The applicant's proposed infrastructure (e.g., wireline routes, towers) shall be submitted as line and point features and the layer should be named "Network_Infrastructure" in the submitted shapefiles. The submitted routes shall be provided as a singular line representative of all fiber infrastructure (conduit, fiber, aerial attachments, etc.) to be placed along any individual pathway (e.g., public rights-of-way, private easements). Routes shall be inclusive of all new backhaul, backbone, and distribution infrastructure. Routes that would only be constructed as part of subscriber activations (drops to individual subscriber locations constructed upon customer signup), shall not be included in the submitted file. The project's estimated take rate and drop mileage will be captured separately within the application.
- The applicant's proposed service area(s) shall be submitted as polygon features. The polygon must encompass all proposed locations and proposed infrastructure routes submitted as part of the project shapefile and the layer should be labeled "Project_Boundary" in the submitted shapefiles.

The uploaded file should be in shapefile format.

LR5.04 – Please provide a logical network design drawing (network diagram) that illustrates the logical connectivity for the network, depicts the desired architecture of the network in terms of hardware placement, and hardware redundancy, and indicates the types of network platforms or technologies to use in each layer of the network. This document shall be submitted in PDF format.

Existing infrastructure present on the diagram should be identified as existing to clearly identify new proposed infrastructure. The diagram should convey the network's capacity to provide each proposed BSL with required broadband speeds. This document shall be submitted in PDF format. An example of the logical network diagram can be found on the ConnectMT website (<https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR5.05 – Applicants must provide a project cost estimate that offers sufficient granularity to demonstrate an understanding of the proposed project and associated estimated costs. The project cost estimate shall be submitted in spreadsheet format using the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Project Costs Submission template provided on the ConnectMT website (<https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

The cost estimate must include a detailed itemization of each cost and sufficient description to verify the eligibility of each cost item proposed. For each cost item, the applicant must indicate the breakdown of costs to be covered by grant funds versus those provided by applicant matching funds. The applicant shall only provide eligible costs within its project cost estimate. The project cost estimate shall be submitted in spreadsheet format using the template.

For applicant awareness: Please note, in building the project cost summary, a contingency of 5% of construction costs is allowable.

LR5.06 – The applicant must provide a project timeline that articulates its ability to complete the project by September 30th, 2026. The timeline shall include the key milestones for project implementation:

- Planning or engineering;
- Permitting or make ready;
- Material and equipment procurement;
- Network construction;
- Subscriber activations; and
- Project closeout submission.

The timeline document shall be submitted in spreadsheet format using the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Project Timeline template provided on the ConnectMT website (<https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR5.07 – Has a Montana Professional Engineer certified the project plan materials?

If you answer “No” to LR5.07, a certification by a Montana Professional Engineer will be **required** before a contract can be executed. Be prepared to provide one in the negotiation process.

If you answer “Yes” to LR5.07, please upload the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Professional Engineer Certification in response to LR5.07a.

LR5.07a – The applicant must obtain certification from a currently licensed professional engineer confirming the accuracy and completeness of the Project Plan materials and attesting that the proposed network can deliver broadband service that meets the requisite performance requirements to all proposed locations within the required deployment timeline. The certification shall be submitted in PDF format using the ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Professional Engineer Certification template provided on the ConnectMT website (<https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR5.08-LR5.11 – In addition to obtaining technical certification from a currently licensed professional engineer, the applicant’s Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must certify that the organization will comply with the following program requirements:

LR5.08 – Applicant certifies that at time of project closeout, all proposed BSLs shall be capable of receiving service with speeds of not less than 100 Mbps for downloads and 20 Mbps for uploads with 95% of latency measurements during testing windows falling at or below 100 milliseconds round-trip time.

LR5.09 --Applicant certifies that its submitted project cost estimate is accurate and encompasses all costs to be incurred by the applicant as part of the proposed broadband project.

LR5.10 – Applicant certifies that its submitted project timeline is accurate and that it will be capable of providing broadband service to each proposed BSL that desires service within the committed timeframe.

LR5.11 – Applicant certifies that it will obtain all necessary federal, state, and local governmental permits and required approvals necessary for the proposed work to be completed.

OPTIONAL SCORING CRITERIA

For applicant awareness: Certification of below questions is not required to be awarded, but will result in extra points being awarded.

LR5.12 – By clicking this box, I certify that at time of project closeout all proposed BSLs shall be capable of receiving speeds not less than 100 Mbps for uploads and 100 Mbps for downloads with 95% of latency measurements during test windows falling below 100 milliseconds round-trip time.

For applicant awareness: There is no requirement for the applicant to provide 100/100 Mbps to all proposed BSLs. However, the applicant will be able to obtain an additional 10 points for this commitment.

LR5.12a – Please upload a completed ConnectMT ARPA Lightning Round Project Performance template. The template is provided on the ConnectMT website (<https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR5.13 – By clicking this box, I certify that this project will leverage existing middle mile fiber optic infrastructure to support its deployment. If selecting YES, you will be prompted to upload supporting evidence in supporting this claim in LR5.13a.

For Applicant Awareness: There is no requirement for the applicant to leverage existing middle mile fiber optic infrastructure. However, the applicant will be able to obtain an additional 5 points for this commitment. Complete and compliant supporting evidence must be submitted for points to be awarded.

LR5.13a – Please upload the required supporting evidence documentation.

Please upload sufficient evidence supporting this claim. The evidence should include a geolocated photograph of where the proposed project routes will tie-into existing middle mile fiber optic infrastructure and a brief description detailing the following applicable information:

- If the proposed network leverages middle mile fiber optic infrastructure from its own existing network, describe that infrastructure and how the proposed network interconnects with it.
- If the proposed network leverages middle mile fiber optic infrastructure from another organization's existing network, describe that infrastructure, how the proposed network interconnects with it, and the negotiated terms for which the applicant will have access to the infrastructure for the life of their required service commitment.

LR5.14 – By clicking this box, I certify that prior access to the public rights-of-way/easements have been obtained for the project area. If selecting YES, you will be prompted to upload supporting evidence in supporting this claim in LR5.14a.

For Applicant Awareness: There is no requirement for the applicant to obtain prior access to the public rights-of-way/easements or have been obtained for the project area. However, the applicant will be able to obtain an additional 5 points for this commitment. Complete and compliant supporting evidence must be submitted for points to be awarded

LR5.14a – Please upload the required supporting evidence documentation.

Please upload an executed copy of a ROW permit, franchise agreement, or land easement agreement applicable to the proposed project area. The provided evidence document must not be expired.

TEMPLATES AND DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- Excel Locations List template that includes detailed information on each BSL that the project intends to serve;
- PDF file detailing how the proposed infrastructure will deliver service that meets or exceeds program requirements;

- Zipped files of shapefiles illustrating current infrastructure relative to the proposed network design;
- PDF file illustrating the network's major components and specifications;
- Excel Project Costs template detailing project costs, including itemized expenses;
- Excel Project Timeline template outlining the project's planning and completion schedule;
- PDF Professional Engineer Certification demonstrating the network's capability to meet performance standards, if applicable; and
- Relevant templates and evidence supporting certifications of Optional Scoring Criteria, as required.

SECTION 6: ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

SUMMARY

This section of the application includes additional commitments that the applicant can offer as part of their project to better support the communities encompassed within the proposed project area. These commitments are not required as part of a qualifying application but will result in extra points being awarded.

The applicable commitments are listed below.

For applicant awareness: There is no requirement to offer any additional community commitments. However, up to 34 points will be awarded per the following table:

Community Commitments	Points
Provider offers monthly subscriber fees for low-income residents within the project area	2
Project will provide free broadband service for 3 Years to an identified community center	2
Project will provide service to an identified health care location that provides telehealth services	10
Project will provide co-Location of existing or new facilities for an identified public safety network	10
Provider offers “Open Access” on identified segments of their proposed project deployment	10

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

LR6.01 – Applicant certifies that they will offer a low-cost service option for low-income BSLs within the proposed project area. If selecting YES, you will be prompted to upload evidence supporting this claim in LR6.01a.

LR6.01a – Please upload the supporting low-cost service option evidence.

Please upload a document that details the proposed subscriber service options that will be applied to the service area, indicating which option is the low-cost service option that low-income BSLs qualify for.

LR6.02 – Applicant certifies that they will offer free broadband service for a minimum of three (3) years to an identified community center within the proposed project area. If selecting YES, you will be prompted to upload evidence supporting this claim in LR6.02a and LR6.02b.

LR6.02a – Please upload the ARPA Community Center Identification Template (provided on the ConnectMT website: <https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR6.02b – Please upload supporting evidence of an agreement (or planned agreement) with a qualified representative of the identified community center.

Please upload evidence of a signed agreement (or tentative agreement) between the provider and the community center representative listed in the ARPA Community Center Identification Template.

LR6.03 – Applicant certifies that they will provide service to an identified health care location (that offers telehealth services) within the proposed project area. If selecting YES, you will be prompted to upload evidence supporting this claim in LR6.03a and LR6.03b.

LR6.03a – Please upload the ARPA Health Care Location Identification Template (provided on the ConnectMT website: <https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR6.03b – Please upload supporting evidence showing that a qualified representative of the identified health care location has confirmed that the health care location provides telehealth services.

Please upload evidence provided by the health care location representative listed in the ARPA Health Care Location Identification Template, confirming the identified location offers telehealth services.

LR6.04 – Applicant certifies that they will provide co-location of existing or new facilities for an identified public safety network as part of their proposed project. If selecting YES, you will be prompted to upload evidence supporting this claim in LR6.04a and LR6.04b.

LR6.04a – Please upload the ARPA Public Safety Co-location Location Template (provided on the ConnectMT website: <https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR6.04b – Please upload supporting evidence from a qualified representative from the identified public safety entity confirming plans for co-location of their network components within the identified co-location location.

Please upload evidence provided by the public safety representative listed in the ARPA Public Safety Co-location Location Template, confirming that their public safety network will be co-located at the location identified in the ARPA Public Safety Co-location Location Template.

LR6.05 – Applicant certifies that they will provide “Open Access” on identified segments of their proposed project deployment. If selecting YES, you will be prompted to upload evidence supporting this claim in LR6.05a and LR6.05b.

LR6.05a – Please upload a completed ARPA Open Access Template (provided on the ConnectMT website: <https://connectmt.mt.gov/>).

LR6.05b – Please upload the shapefile containing the routes/portions of the network that will be made available for “Open Access.”

TEMPLATES AND DOCUMENTS TO PREPARE

- Supporting low-cost service option evidence, if necessary.
- ARPA Community Center Identification Template and supporting evidence, if necessary.
- ARPA Health Care Location Identification Template and supporting evidence, if necessary.
- ARPA Public Safety Co-location Location Template and supporting evidence, if necessary.
- ARPA Open Access Template and shapefile, if necessary.

SECTION 7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND CURING

SUMMARY

This section provides applicants with the option to submit additional information as part of their applications. This section is optional.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

LR7.01 – If the applicant would like to provide a letter of support to the ConnectMT Broadband Office, please include that here but note that this information will not be used to evaluate the application.

LR7.01a – Please upload the relevant files, if applicable.

The following questions should only be completed if you have been asked to provide additional or updated information. **LEAVE THESE QUESTIONS BLANK AS PART OF THE INITIAL APPLICATION.**

LR7.02 – Additional narrative field. Only use this field if asked by the grants administrator.

LR7.03 – Additional upload field. Only use this field if asked by the grants administrator.

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)	Signed into law in March 2021, ARPA authorized \$1.9 trillion in economic stimulus measures to support recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, including \$350 billion to state, local, and Tribal governments through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) Program and \$10 billion to states, territories, freely associated states, and Tribal governments through the Capital Projects Fund (CPF) Program.
AmpliFund	Application system where the Lightning Round application is hosted. Applicants apply and submit all documents through this system.
Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)	The person who is legally able to make financial decisions and sign contracts on the applicant's behalf.
Lightning Round	Additional subgrantee selection round for the ConnectMT ARPA Program.
Broadband Serviceable Location	A valid address in the state of Montana represents either a household, business, or farm.
Broadband Serviceable Location (BSL) Fabric	The data set of all residential and business locations (or structures) in the United States where fixed broadband internet access service is or can be installed.
Build America Buy America (BABA)	Act that requires that all the iron, steel, manufactured products (including but not limited to fiber-optic communications facilities), and construction materials used in the project or other eligible activities are produced in the United States unless a waiver is granted.
ConnectMT Broadband Office	Section of the Montana Department of Administration (DOA) responsible for overseeing and carrying out broadband development and implementation.
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)	U.S. agency that regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories.
Frontier Location	BSLs that lack access to reliable broadband service with a speed of not less than 4 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream and latency less than or equal to 100 ms.
Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU)	The exclusive, unrestricted, and indefeasible right to use one, a pair or more strands of a fiber cable for any legal purpose; with an IRU contractual arrangement the buyer of the IRU can unconditionally use the fiber of the IRU for long periods of time, approximately 25–30 years.
ISP	Internet service provider
Latency	Latency measures the time it takes for information to travel from one point on a network to another. The ConnectMT ARPA Program requires awardees to submit performance testing that demonstrates at least 95% of latency measurements are at or below 100 milliseconds round-trip time.
Personally Identifiable Information (PII)	Any information that can be used to identify an individual, such as their name, address, social security number, or other unique identifiers.

Term	Definition
Subgrantee	An entity to which a subgrant is awarded and who is accountable to the grantee for use of funds provided.
Underserved Location	BSLs that lack access to reliable broadband service with a speed of not less than 100 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream and latency less than or equal to 100 ms.
Unserved Location	BSLs that lack access to reliable broadband service at speeds of at least 25 Mbps downstream and 10 Mbps upstream and latency levels less than or equal to 100 ms.