



# MONTANA BEAD PREQUALIFICATION

## Deep Dive

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# INTRODUCTIONS

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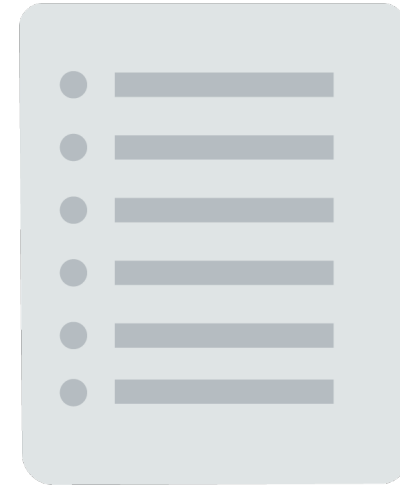
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# BEAD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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- The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) is designed to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment, and broadband adoption programs across the country. BEAD is administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).
- The State of Montana was awarded \$628 million in BEAD funding to connect all unserved locations in the state with reliable and affordable broadband



# BEAD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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The Montana Broadband Office (MBO) will execute the subgrantee selection process across three phases:

## **Map Challenge Process:**

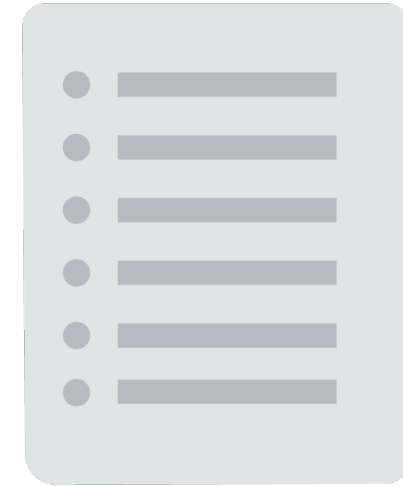
Nonprofits, ISPs, and local governments can submit challenges to the broadband map.

## **Prequalification:**

Applicants will submit materials for prequalification to meet the BEAD minimum eligibility requirements

## **Main Round Application:**

Once applicants submit prequalification materials, they are able to complete the main round application with project specific information.



# 2024 PROGRAM TIMELINE

*\*All dates are estimated and subject to change\**





# PREQUALIFICATION

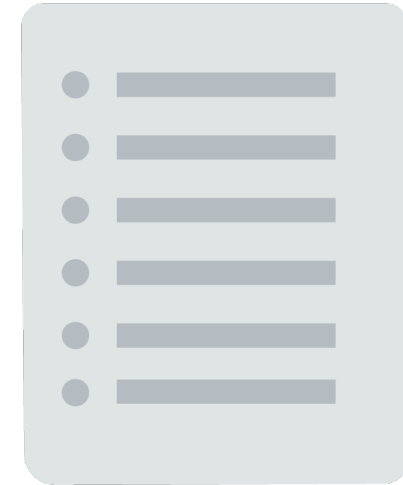
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- **Purpose**

- The purpose of the prequalification process is to evaluate the eligibility status of each intended applicant to ensure these entities have a smooth main round application process.
- Enables applicants to have a smooth main round application process

- **Timing**

- The prequalification application will be available in early March
- Providers who intend to apply during the main application round are strongly encouraged to submit a prequalification application.



# UNDERSTANDING REQUIREMENTS

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- **Subgrantee Eligibility Requirements**

To receive BEAD funding, subgrantees must:

1. Meet mandated financial requirements
2. Have provided broadband service in The State of Montana for at least 1 year
3. Propose a project that will provide 100/20 service to all locations within service area within 4-year timeline
4. Can comply with all requirements mandated by NTIA and the State of Montana

- **Prequalification Application Requirements**

The BEAD NOFO explicitly outlines the requirements to meet the program's minimum eligibility criteria:

1. **Financial Capability:** Certifications and documentation, Letter of credit compliance statement, Audited financial statements
2. **Organizational Capability:** Key management resumes, Organizational charts, Certification of operational readiness, Evidence of prior service, Compliance with regulatory filings
3. **Certifications and Compliance:** Adherence to federal, state, and local laws, Compliance with occupational safety regulations



# ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

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The first section of the prequalification application will request basic contact details for the organizations primary contact and authorized organizational representative.

- The authorized organizational representation (AOR) should be an individual who is legally able to make financial decisions and sign contracts on behalf of the company.





# FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

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- **Financial Statements**

- Submission of unqualified\* audited financial statements from the prior year
- If the organization only has qualified\*\* audited financial statements from the prior year, be prepared to provide those along with any documentation addressing the findings
- If neither is available, provide a justification if those statements are unavailable
- **NOTE:** Audited financial statements will be required prior to award.
- Applicants will also be asked to provide interim financial statements for the current year



**\*Unqualified audited financial statements:**

audited financial statements that have no noted issues from the preparer

**\*\*Qualified audited financial statements:**

audited financial statements that have noted issues from the preparer



# FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

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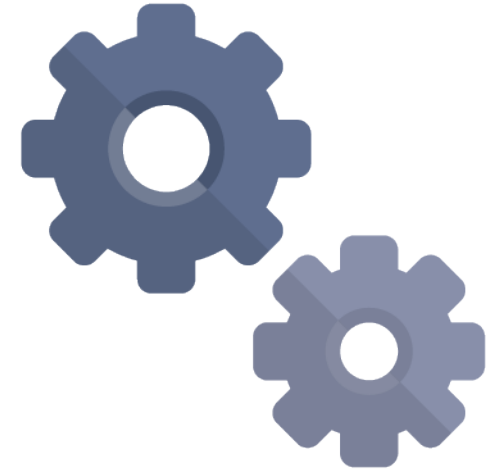
- **Executive Authority for Financial Capability**
  - Be prepared to provide a statement signed by an Authorized Organizational Representative that certifies that the organization meets the minimum financial qualifications of the BEAD program.
  - A template will be available for use.
- **Letter of Credit**
  - Be prepared to provide a statement of how the organization plans to meet the requirements for a letter of credit in alignment with the instructions published by NTIA in the [waiver](#).



# ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

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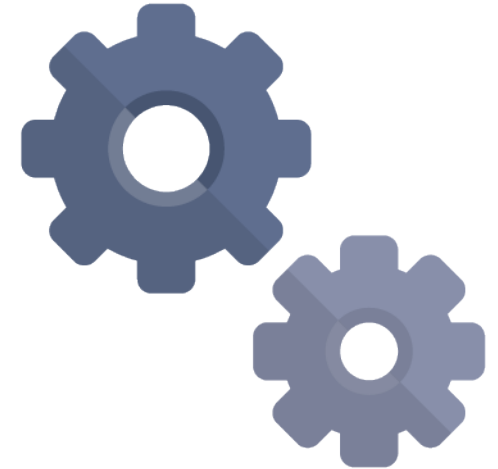
- One of the main goals of the prequalification process is to ensure each applicant has the organizational capability to successfully manage BEAD funding.
- Each applicant must provide the following related to the organizational management:
  - Resumes of key management personnel
  - Roles and responsibilities of key management personnel
  - Organizational chart depicting key management only
  - Description of organization's prior experience with broadband projects
  - Information about current broadband deployment projects



# ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

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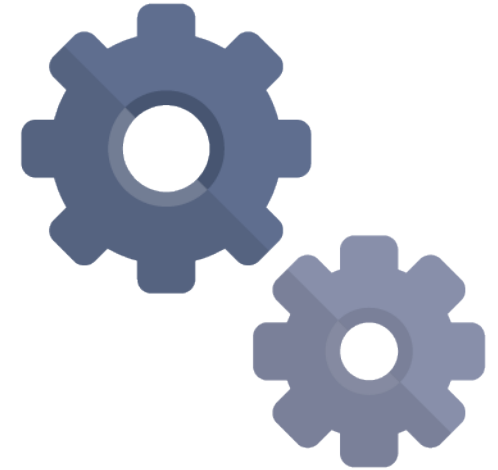
- **Resumes of Key Management Personnel**
  - One page per individual
  - Upload as a PDF
  - Include a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience
  - Remove any Personally Identifying Information (PII)
- **Roles and Responsibilities**
  - Upload a detailed narrative outlining the organization's managerial approach
  - Include roles and responsibilities of all key management personnel
- **Organizational Chart**
  - Upload an organizational chart to include all relevant management personnel, including all detailed in provided resumes and narrative
  - Names and titles should be included for all positions



# ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

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- **Prior Broadband Experience**
  - Detail company's scope, amount, length, and funding source for three recent broadband projects
  - Should also include past involvement in telecommunications deployments and projects of a similar scale
  - Detail methods and strategies used in handling projects of a comparable size and scope
- **Current Broadband Deployment Projects**
  - Use the provided template to upload a list of all broadband deployment projects that have received or will receive public funding
  - Include all projects the company or its affiliates has applied for or intends to apply for



# CERTIFICATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

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- **Staff Certifications and Compliance**
  - Applicants must certify that they have employed personnel with the relevant certifications for deployment projects as mandated by state and federal law and reflective of industry best practices.
  - These individuals must include:
    - ✓ Chief Technology Officer
    - ✓ Project Engineer
    - ✓ Contractor Oversight Team
- Applicants will be required to upload a list of certifications required for staff deployment projects. This should be organized by role.
- If the hiring of contractors is anticipated, the applicant must detail the intended resources and the relevant certifications and requirements that will be confirmed before contracting with any entity.





# CERTIFICATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

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- **Environmental, Historical, and BABA Requirements**
  - Compliance with Environmental and Historical Preservation requirements as outlined in the BEAD NOFO and the Montana Initial Proposal Volume 2
  - Compliance with Build America, Buy America (BABA) requirements as outlined in the BEAD NOFO and the Montana Initial Proposal Volume 2
- **Legal Opinion**
  - Each applicant must upload a legal opinion that certifies they can carry out the funded activities competently and in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws
  - A template will be provided, but use of this template is not mandatory



# CERTIFICATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

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- **Health and Safety**
  - Certify that workers will be permitted to create worker-led health and safety committees
- **Prior Service and FCC Form 477**
  - Has the company previously provided voice/broadband service in the state of Montana?
    - ✓ If so, confirm submission of FCC Form 477 and Broadband DATA Act as applicable
    - ✓ If unable to confirm, provide a justification as to how the company will comply with the Commission's rules and regulations
  - Commit to participating in ACP or other programs
- **Business Registration**
  - Confirm active SAM.gov registration and upload documentation
  - Confirm active registration with the state of Montana and upload documentation



# FEDERAL LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

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- **Federal Law Compliance**

- Certify compliance with federal labor and employment laws on broadband development projects over the last three years
- Certify that the organization, contractors, and subcontractors have consistently complied with federal labor and employment laws
- Confirm that the organization has not been found to have violated laws such as OSHA, FLSA, or similar laws within the last three years
  - ✓ If violations have been found, detail mitigating actions taken and provide documentation

- **Labor and Employment Practices**

- Certify organization, contractors, and subcontractors have existing labor and employment practices in place and commit to annual recertification for the duration of the project
- Provide narrative description of existing labor and employment practices and provide any supporting materials available
- Upload documentation of applicable wage scales and wage and overtime practices by employee class
- Indicate if workforce is unionized



# RISK MANAGEMENT

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- Risk Management – Cybersecurity
  - Confirm that the organization has a cybersecurity risk management plan compliant with NIST Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity and the requirements of Executive Order 14028.
    - ✓ If confirmed:
      - Upload a copy of the plan
      - Certify that the plan will be updated periodically as needed and any significant changes will be submitted to the State within 30 days
      - Provide a narrative detailing the expected timeline to complete plan updates
    - ✓ If unable to confirm:
      - Will the entity be able to provide a plan during the main round application?



# RISK MANAGEMENT

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- Risk Management – Supply Chain
  - Confirm the company has a current Supply Chain Risk Management Plan based upon the following documents:
    - ✓ NISTIR 8276
    - ✓ Key Practices in Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Observations from Industry
    - ✓ NIST 800-161, Cybersecurity Supply Chain Risk Management Practices for Systems and Organizations
    - ✓ Any other applicable SCRM guidance from NIST
  - If confirmed:
    - ✓ Upload a copy of the plan
    - ✓ Certify that the plan will be updated periodically as needed and any significant changes will be submitted to the State within 30 days
    - ✓ Provide a narrative detailing the expected timeline to complete plan updates
  - If unable to confirm:
    - ✓ Will the entity be able to provide a plan during the main round application?



# OWNERSHIP

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- Federal regulations require disclosure of relevant ownership information, including but not limited to
  - Identity and relationship of persons or entities directly or indirectly owning or controlling the applicant
  - Identity and amount of ownership of any party holding 10% or more of stock in the applicant
  - Additional specific details will be requested of limited partnerships, general partnerships, and limited liability companies
  - Any FCC-regulated entity or applicant for an FCC license of in which any of the applicant's owners hold 10% or more of stock





# HOW TO APPLY

- **Application Registration**
  - By clicking the 'Apply' button, applicants will be prompted to Log In or Register.
  - When the BEAD Application Portal (powered by Amplifund) Login screen appears, users will click the 'Register' button to Create New Account for their Applicant Organization. Applicants should only Register ONCE for their Organization. Users can be added to the Organization account
- **Navigating the Applicant Portal**
  - Once registered and in the applicant portal, users can edit their information or add Users through the Account Information section.
  - User roles: Editor vs Administrator
  - Editor can modify application but cannot submit

Test Opp. for Form

Print Help Download Apply

Opportunity Information

Title Test Opp. for Form

Description

Create New Account

If you have already registered, please click [here](#) to login.

User Information

Email Address\*

Role Administrator

Password\*

Confirm Password\*

Contact Information



# HOW TO APPLY

- **Completing the Prequalification Application**

- The Navigation toolbar provides quick access to all sections of the application. Once 'Marked as Complete' a checkmark will appear on the section header.

The screenshot displays a web application interface for a prequalification application. At the top right, a user profile for 'John Doe' is visible with a dropdown menu containing 'Account Information', 'Change Password', and 'Log Out'. The main content area is titled 'Test Opp. for Form' and features a progress bar with four steps: 'Opportunity Details' (marked complete with a green checkmark), 'Project Information', 'Application Forms', and 'Submit'. Below the progress bar, there are buttons for 'Help', 'Download', 'Save', and 'Save & Continue'. The interface also includes a navigation menu with 'Applications', 'Account Information', 'Users', and 'FAQ'. A 'New User' form is visible on the right, and a user profile for 'John Doe - Organization Administrator' is shown at the bottom left.

- ✓ **Save** – Saves progress and remain on current page
- ✓ **Mark as Complete** – Indicates the form has been completed
- ✓ **Save & Continue** – Save progress on page and move on to next section/form
- ✓ Once all sections have been Completed, a user with the Administration role can click the Submit button.
- ✓ Once Submitted, applications cannot be modified.



# CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION

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## Materials to Prepare for Prequalification:

- ✓ Identify AOR and key application contacts
- ✓ Company Name, Address, TIN, Contact Information
- ✓ Gather financial statements and other documentation
- ✓ Identify key managerial staff, update resumes and organizational charts
- ✓ Confirm active registrations with SAM.gov and the State of Montana
- ✓ Identify projects of similar size and/or scope for past performance
- ✓ Ensure accurate ownership documentation
- ✓ Review [BEAD NOFO](#), [MT Initial Proposal Volume 2](#), and [relevant regulations](#)



# PREQUALIFICATION TIMELINE

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Technical Assistance Schedule			
Component	Topic	Anticipated Date	Mode
Prequalification	Deep Dive	2/8/2024	Webinar
Prequalification	Q/A	2/16/24*	Webinar
Prequalification	Deep Dive	2/29/2024*	Webinar
Prequalification	Q&A	3/8/2023*	Webinar



# PROGRAM CONTACTS

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BEAD Program Information: <https://connectmt.mt.gov>

Initial Proposal Volumes 1 and 2: <https://connectmt.mt.gov/IIJA/Funding>

Frequently Asked Questions: <https://connectmt.mt.gov/IIJA/FAQ>

Technical Assistance Email: [ConnectMTTechAssistance@mt.gov](mailto:ConnectMTTechAssistance@mt.gov)

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Representing the State of Montana

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406.444.3393



# PREQUALIFICATION DEEP DIVE Q&A

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# Q&A

